THE LIVES AND SINGVLAR VERTVES OF [illegible] ELZEAR,

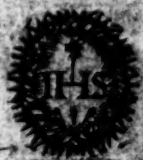
Count of Sabran.

And of his Wife the bleſſed Counteſſe DELPHINA, both Virgins and married.

Written in French by R. P. STEPHEN BINET, S. I.

AND

Tranſlated into English by Sr. T. H.



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TO THE RIGHT HONOVRABLE *JOHN ERLE*, of Shrewsbury, Baron Talbot of Goodrich, &c. And the Lady Mary his Counteſſe.

RIght Honourable, the many eminent vertues with vvhich the purified ſoules of this happy payre of Saintes was illuſtrated, as alſo the apt conſequence of two

ſuch choice Examples after my late Edition of the Holy Court, drew me into this preſent piece, but moſt particularly, my ardent deſire to ſerue your Honours by this ſo faire an opportunity. Heer ſhall you ſee pious retirement in the midſt of publique pompe, ſilent contemplation in the noyce of a practique life, and a holy emulation in coniugall amity, mutually to out-vy one another in goodneſſe. Such happy ſtrifes begin with Zealous intentions, proceed with tranquility of mind, and are crowned with neuer fading comforts. Elzear appeares

in

in this Hiſtory, a Guardian in the chamber, a Counſellour in the cabinet, a Soldier in the field, and an Embaſſadour in publique employments: Al Which he mannageth prudently, and as Fiſhes in the Salt ſea, contracteth not the incident brackiſhneſſe of the tumultuary Waues of Paſſion. He growes to be a ſaint inſenſibly, and then ſeemes to himſelfe the vnWorthyeſt of al men, When the pious hearts, and ready voWes of the beſt haue already cannonized him vertue. In Sibilo auræ tenuis. *Whiſpereth ſoft ſoWnds Within his ſoule Which the tongues of men*

articulate

articulate into Wordes, and the Whole World lowd Ecchoes proclaymeth. The application, and vſe of theſe two remarkeable liues, I leaue to others, who (though I be ſilent) may in the greateſt part of each, read both your noble names, not vnaptly characterred. In the meane time it shal Wel enough become me (modeſtly) not to particulariſe ought, eyther in your ſelues, or your glorious Aunceſtors, amongſt vvhom in moſt things many Elzears may be deciphered but thus iuſtly (as I do) in ſubſtance to offer the occaſion thereof, and With vowed Zeale euer ac-

knowled-

knowledging much obligation, to remaine the ready, & obsequious seruant of your commands,

Th. Hawkins.

THE

THE LIFE AND SINGVLAR VERTVES OF SAINT ELZEAR,

A French Gentleman.

The birth, and noble extraction of the Count Saint ELZEAR.

CHAP. I.

THAT which maketh the Count *Elzear* most eminent, is not the nobilitie of his bloud, nor splendor of his aunceſtours, but the illustrious greatneſſe of his perfections. He ſet a higher Price vpon the innocent

innocent milke of vertues, and graces (the daughters of heauen) which he by long draughts had ſuck'd in, then the bloud of his aunceſtours, how noble ſo euer. Verily thoſe, who are borne in gold and ſcarlet, ſeeme many times to be created the obiects of all euils. Yet muſt we affirme, when nobilitie aſſociateth with ſanctitie, & that the rayes both of the one, and other commixe together; the luſtre thereof is redoubled, and more ſparkleth in the eyes of God, Angels, and men: but theſe are Phenixes, for full fiue hundred yeares the World produceth but one, and ſcarcely that. This happy coniunction in the perſon of bleſſed *Elzear*, graũteth him many great priuiledges, both in the Annals of the Church, and in Eternity. Could my pen be inſpired with the ſame ſpirit, which animateth the life of this diuine *Count*, I might hope to let the world ſee one of the moſt re-

marqueable liues which for a very long time hath been in the Church of God.

If I intended heere to draw his petigree, & to ſet forth his family I might make a particular volume. Writing the life of a Saint, who made litle account of earthly nobilitie, and onely valued heauenly, I wil not enlarge, to referre his aunceſtours, and all the names, and armes of families engrafted in his: I will tell you in groſſe, that his houſe was allyed (as ſaith the Hiſtory) to Imperiall, Regall, and Princely houſes of Europe. It hath had great Captaines, as Mounſieur Stileon his great grand-Father, Mounſieur Elzear his grand-Father Count of Forcalquier, Anſois, & other lands in the Coũty of Veniſin, in Prouẽce, the alliance of Sabrans, the family of the Lords of Saut, Porcellet, & other great Lords of Prouence, and Fraunce: But it is not my purpoſe to ſtay vpon theſe wordly greatneſſes.

His

His father was *Hermengaud of Sabran Count of Arian*, issued from a noble and auncient family of Prouence his Mother was *Laudana D'Albes*, or *D'Aubes*, daughter of the Lord Roquemartin who deserueth for her incomparable vertue to be surnamed the good *Counteſſe*. Verily so was she, for thorough her excellent behauiour, her sweet modestie, but aboue all by her singular pietie she wonne all the hearts of the whole world to loue, and admire her. Vertue hath this force by its powerful attractiues, that it imperiously swayeth ouer humane affectiõs: It is an Adamant which draweth to it the most harsh, and obdurate hearts. Perhaps this great goodnes was partly that which drew on her this blessing of heauen, to become the Mother of so good a Child, as *Elzear*. No sooner had she conceiued this diuine Infant, but she likewise in her soule conceiued

a moſt ardent deſire to chaunge her life, and ſeriouſly to addict her ſelfe to the ſtudie of perfection. Whoſoeuer receiueth into his ſtomack a litle of the roote of *The flower de Luce*, hath ſo ſweet a breath that he ſauoureth of the moſt fragrant odours of march-violets, & all his words are ſweet and odoriferous.

This vertuous *Counteſſe* hauing in her chaſt womb conceiued this litle bodie, was ſo perfumed with the delicious ſauour of all vertues, that her Confeſſour wondring at this almoſt miraculous chaunge, confidently ſaied, that ſhould this Woman liue, ſhe would be a mirrour of moſt eminent perfection, or els haue a child to be one day a great, and glorious light in the Church of God. Theſe two Prophecies were moſt true, and very ſoone accompliſhed. Angell-Guardians haue many times inſpired the Mothers of Saints with imaginations, which were the Oracles of their liues

liues,&the horoſcopes of Paradiſe. The mother of *S. Dominique* dreamed she was deliuered of a litle dog, whó bare a burning torch in his mouth. The mother of S. Bernard confidẽtly thought, she was big with a dog, who lowdly barked,& for shame hid her ſelf, when she felt the throwes of child-bearīg. Another ſaw in ſleep, that al her bowels were caryèd into heauen, and there chaunged into a bright ſun. The good *Counteſſe* had a thouſand cogitatiõs in her ſoule, whilſt ſhe bare this holy Infant in her belly; yea she bare him as a Treaſure hidden, and as a precious relique, which ſhould one day be the bleſſing of the whole houſe.

The time of her child-bearing being arriued, she happilly was deliuered in the yeare 1284. whilſt *Philip the Hardy* ſonne of our King holy *S. Lewis* raigned,& brought forth a Babe which (to ſay truely) ſeemed an Angel: It was in the

the Caſtle of Robians neare Anſois. She played not the foolish mother, fondly pleaſing her ſelfe with a thouſand demonſtrations of ioy, ſeing she had brought a man-child into the world; but deſiring to offer him to God and heauen, and rather to be the mother of an Angel then a mā, she tooke this litle creature into her armes, and with teares in her eyes, & with a voice ful of loue, made offer of him to God, ſaying; Lord God omnipotent, who with a powerful voice draweſt al creatures out of nothing, and giueſt them their Being: I yeild thee a million of thanks, that thou haſt been pleaſed to afford me this child; Thou gaueſt him me; Behold I reſtore him thee, yea cordially, to thee who art the benigne Father both of the Mother, and Sonne. I haue but one moſt humble prayer to make to thee. Good God denie it not: I beſeech thee receiue this litle infant

bathed

bathed with my teares, into the number of thy ſeruants, and beſtow on him thy moſt holy benediction. But if Alas! thou foreſeeſt he will proue rebellious againſt thy diuine Commaundments, I humbly beg with all the powers of my ſoule, thou cauſe him to die ſo ſoone as his ſoule is purifyed in the innocent waters of holy baptiſme; Rather had I behold him without any victorious palme in his hands, or any merit, to die to the world and liue in heauen, then to ſee him, guilty of ſpiritual treaſon, leading a miſerable life in the midſt of the mires of this world, caytiue and replenished with a thouſand calamities. Al[redacted] wept for ioy hearing this good Woman ſo to ſpeake from the bottome of her heart, and to conſecrate her eldeſt ſonne with ſo much feruour, to the ſeruice of God. Our Lord receiued this Holocauſt in the odour of ſweetnes,

and

& blessed the mother, and child, with ample benedictions.

This Babe was solemnly baptised, and on the holy font of baptisme named *Elzear*. Good people of that Time named him, *the Lord, Saint Aulzias.*

Of his tender child-hood, and his first practise of vertue.

II. Chap.

MERCY, and all vertues seemed to be the nurses of this holy Infant; scarcely was he borne, but that he soone shewed an incredible care of the poore. Being in the armes of his gouernesses, if he mett any miserable begger, he cast his eies vpon him with pretty glaunces full

full of loue and compaſſion, then he ſet himſelfe to moane and cry ſo bitterly, that to ſtill him they were faine to runne haſtily to the Caſtle, and bring almes for the poore, and behold he was inſtantly appeaſed. To that the nurſes hauing obſerued this inſtinct had their pockets perpetually furniſhed with bread and money to giue to the poore, or otherwiſe neuer would the child ceaſe to torment them: but being now growne bigger all he could lay hands on, he diſtributed to the poore, and when he was able to do ſo much as to bring along with him ſome litle child, of ſuch as begged for their liuing, he cauſed them to dine at his table, and well entertained them, and himſelfe for the pleaſure he tooke therein, and to encourage them, fed with a good appetite. He was delighted to play with his companions, but it was to endeuour to winne ſomewhat. And

inſtantly to giue it the poore. Well might he then ſay with *Iob* the great Eaſterne Prince; *Mercy, and I bee by one venter, and we are brother and ſiſter Twinnes, we were rocked in the ſame cradle, fed with the ſame milke, nor euer haue we liued one without the other.* God the Creatour by theſe petty trials of Infantine vertues, many times sheweth, to how high a degree of perfection he will raiſe ſome of his greateſt ſeruants. So by the beautie of the dawning we iudge of the brightnes of the morning and the noonetide; So by the bud we make an eſtimate of the roſe; and ſo by the firſt draughts of an excellent Painter we iudge of the perfection of his diuine works; when he ſhal haue heightned, and ſhadowed his piece, and touched it with the laſt ſtrokes of his pencill which turneth art into Nature. This louely Infant was all the loue of his parents, and of all the world; He

was

was beautiful as an Angel, of colour liuely, & vermilion; His cheeke ſeemed a roſe fallen into milke, hiſ ſpeach ſweet, and graue; his actions ſerious beyond his age; yet ioyous, and pleaſing; he was truly obedient to his gouernour, ful of dutie towards his parents, addicted to deuotion. He ſayed his litle Beades with ſo good a grace, that he imprinted deuotion in ſuch as beheld him to do ſo wel in ſo tender youth. This litle youth daily on his knees ſayd our Ladies office, and the office of the dead beſids his other leſſer deuotions, and moiſtned al with his innocent teares. *William of Sabran* his Vncle by his Father ſide, was Abbot of Saint Victor in Marſeilles; This child was deliuered to him to be inſtructed, and diſpoſed to vertue. Can you imagine how this litle child in a very short time ſo far aduanced towards perfection, and was preuented by

by ſo many fauours from God, that the good father (who had been apointed his Inſtructour) was rapt with admiration to behold his deportmẽts? Aboue al, one time that the litle Count asked him in what part of the world were Martyrs made? Sonne (ſaid he) why do you aske me this queſtion? Becauſe I should much deſire to be caried into that countrey (ſaid he) that I may hope to haue the glorie of Martyrdome: For Alas! If *Ieſus-Chriſt* powred out al his precious bloud for vs, why should we not shed ours for his ſeruice? Theſe words sãke very deep into the heart of the good religious mã, who drew a holy cõfuſion out of them & made vſe of them al his life time, as of a ſpur to prick him on to religious perfection? pondering in his mind, that this child had diſapproued the rule, which ſaieth, the *Diſciple should not excel his Maiſter.* Now imagine with your ſelfe the other perfe-

perfections he acquired in this schoole of vertues, since he so early aymed at the desire of Martirdome, which is the higheſt point of charitie, the Queen of Vertues. The seruants belonging to the [redacted], a wicked rabble, vttered a thousand impurities to corrupt this poore innocent; all their words were nothing but scurrilitie, day and night these wicked creatures besieged this impolluted lamb, desiring to steale from him the precious treasure of his virginitie, but with, a masculine and heroique courage, he appoſed these lewd seruante, proposing to himselfe, by Gods grace, rather to die ten thousand deaths, then euer to consent to mortal sinne. Hauing ouercome this insolent crew of seruants he disposed himselfe to tame his owne flesh, (that familiar deuill of our soules) which he brauely resisted. Being about twelue yeares of age he fasted the Lent, with

with much rigour, & what ſoeuer could be ſaied to him to diuert him from it, yet was he inuincible, and inexorable. When he felt ſome rebellion, he paſſed much farther, for ſecretly he girt his delicate bodie with a rough Cord full of knots, and armed with sharpe pricks, he wounded this flesh, shed much bloud, and the matter had gone on further had it not been they read in his meager and diſcoloured face, that there was ſome thing ſucceded not well with him in this act.

The holy Crueltie was diſcouered, wherewith this tender youth mortyfyed his bodie; A thing which much aſtonished the Abbot, & all his Monkes, who vpon one ſide sharply chid him, calling him litle murderer of his owne life, but were on the other ſide wholy confounded, ſeing this litle Lord, shewed them their leſſon by vſing himſelfe in this manner. The holy

holy Ghoſt takes pleaſure to trace in theſe Infãtine ſoules the firſt draughts of the great ſanctitie, which he with time will characterize on their liues, and will that from the bud we preſage the great beautie of the roſe, & flower of their ſanctitie.

Of his Virginall mariage, and great Puritie.

CHAP. III.

THE moſt illuſtrious *Charles* the ſecond King of *Hieruſalem*, and *Sicily*, being at *Marceilles*, would haue *Elzear* marie, whom he called his Nephew. The wilt of Kings are oracles, and their deſires commands. The child was not aboue

ten

ten yeares old; Yet was he made in his preſence to affie *Delphina, or Dauphina,* of Puy-Michel, daughter of the Lord Puy-Michel in Prouence a young maide, chaſt as a doue, and of a vertue ſuteable to *Elzears.* Theſe poore innocence ſuffered themſelues to be tyed like two ſilly Doues, and trembled before thoſe great Princes; they gaue each other hand, word, and promiſe to enter marie, when they were of age. The deſignes of God and men are very different in their aymes. The Princes hoped from this mariage to behold a flourishing poſteritie of Counts of *Sabran*; God will cauſe from thẽce to ariſe a world of vertues, lillyes, Roſes, and miracles, which ſhall be admirable, and inimitable for al the world. Fower yeares after the betroathing, they were maried on *S. Agathas* day, in a place called *Puis Michel.* The ioy of theſe two great and power-

full

ful families can not be recounted. The feasts, Bals, and al the Entertainments. In these occasions the most exorbitant, are the braueſt men. Al is at libertie, and you would say these are triumphs for the death of modestie, which is ordinarily lost in these solemnities. Al the world floated in pleasure, our maried Couple only excepted, who reuolued in their soules, Thoughts, Alas! far different from common apprehension. They kept their hearts so close that it is not to be expressed. Yet they did set a good face vpon it, whilst the feast lasted, and with a faigned mirth (at least as wel as they could) disguized the pressure which tormented their hearts. The new maried Couple were led along to the castle of Ansois to put thē in house together. When al the ceremonies were ended, and al the vexing noise of those troublesome Freind-Foes was finished, they were

left al alone together in a chamber. At which time the Innocent *Delphina* moyſtned her Angelical face with two riuers of aboundant teares, fetching one after an other a douzen of thick ſobs from the bottome of her heart, & proſtrated on both her knees before her husband spake theſe words (Sir) by the extreame violẽce of my parents, I am here. I haue conſented to this mariage by meere force: A ſilly Maide (God wot) durſt not contradict her parẽts, who hold daggers at the throtes of their poore children. I more eſteeme death then loue, and a Tomb then the nuptial bed. I haue conſecrated my virginitie to IESVS-CHRIST, I will either die, or keep my promiſe. Mariage is for men, Virginitie for Angels: I am reſolued to be one of them with the hazard of a thouſand deaths. Take heed you attempt not on that, which is vowed to *God*; Rather conſecra-

ſecrate your ſelfe thereunto. Ah! happy mariage, if we might be both maried, and Virgins together! This ſigh opened her heart, and the heart wide-opened; powred forth ſo many teares by the eies, that it tooke away her ſpeach.

Elzear much amazed at this vnexpected ſpeach, and feeling his heart trāſfixed with theſe diſcourſes watered with ſo many teares, was enforced to mingle his teares with thoſe of his chaſt Spouſe. God gaue him ſo ſtrong touches that he yielded to him, and, his deareſt *Delphina*, well pleaſed to preſerue chaſtitie; For to ſaie truly it was the tendreſt of his deſires. The holy Maide ſeing her ſelfe victorious, ſpent the whole night in great conſolations, powring out a deluge of teares at pleaſure, a thouſand prayers broken with a million of ſighes and ſweet extaſies, recommending the ſacred

Lilly of their Virginity to good IESVS. The enſuing nights (ſo ſoone as they withdrew)she paſſed in a thouſand diſcourſes of heauen with her deare *Elzear*, tranſporting, his mind from Earth to heauen, and diuerting him from any other thought. Do you not imagine, when you behold this young maried Couple that you ſee *S. Cecily*, and her ſpouſe *Tiburtius*; *S. Alexis* and his deare wife holy *Pulcheria* with the Emperour, her Lord and huſband, or two doues, or Diamonds or rather two Seraphins on the Earth and two Innocens in the midſt of a furnace, not being burnt at al? When theſe wicked Courtiers tempted this young *Count*, deſirous to debauſh him, for ful Apology he ſaied; You well know I haue one of the moſt beautiful wiues at this day in the world, with whom I am moſt abonndantly ſatisfyed; what ſhal I then do with theſe poliſhed pieces

with

with which you ſo impertinently vex me? Conſtancie ſurmounteth the inſolencie of theſe euill Court-ſpirits, which with ſo many outragious importunities though to ruine the inuiolable treaſure of his chaſtitie. The Salamander long reſiſteth the fire; but in the end her Ice is heated, is drop by drop diſſolued, and ſhe her ſelfe is turned into flames. *Elzear* a true Salamander, and a true Phenix congealeth among theſe Coales of the Court, and his heart is a Diamond totally inuincible, neuer to be mollifyed.

Of the great lights from heauen, and the holy aſſaults God gaue to his ſoule.

CHAP. IIII.

VELL may you thinke, when God was pleaſed to put this young Lord into ſo hazardous an eſtate, as a royal Salamander into the midſt of burning flames; it was fit he likewiſe fortifie his heart with armes from heauen of a ſpecial temper, and a laſting proofe. The fifteenth yeare of his age on the Eue of the *Aſſumption of our Lady* being at Matins ouer night; He felt a great deſire in himſelf that he might accompany his deare & holy

holy Miſtreſſe, who mounted vp to heauen, at leaſt in ſpirit, shooting his heart, and feruours of loue aboue the vaults of heauen. He for this intention confeſſed, and communicated with much affection, and at dinner ſitting at the Table with his Vncle the *Abbot* ſodainly felt his heart aſſayled with ſo ardent a violence of the Loue of God, that his breaſt ſeemed wholy enflamed with a great fire. This flame flew preſently into his face, he became al fiery, and as red as ſcarlet. His heart and appetite fainted, and needs muſt they haſtily lay him on his bed, thinking it a fit of a very sharp feauer. Verily ſo was it, but it was a feauer of the loue of God, and a diuine acceſſe of the holy Ghoſt which came into this bleſſed ſoule. The curtaines were drawne that taking reſt, theſe feruours might be quenched. In this ſacred ſilence he vnfolded al the playtes of his ſoule, and ope-

opening his whole heart, felt at Paradiſe to ſteale into his boſome. O God what a holy tempeſt of ſobs! what a happy ſtorme of ſighes vpon ſighes, & of waues vpon waues floating & rushing one vpon another, and drenching his bleſſed ſoule with a thouſand, and a thouſand, yea many thouſand fauours from heauen! O what lights, illuminated his ſpirit, what ſweet extaſies, wherewith he ſeemed to die, and his heart to shiuer in pieces. He couered this comfort vnder the vayle of Silence, and concealed it as much as he could, but that we know ſomething of it by his confeſſiſions. He ſaw (ſaith he) that al the earth was a litle thing, & that the whole globe was but as an Atome compared to the immẽſitie of almighty God. That our liues and Ages were but flying moments of Immortallitie. He was ashamed to behold the abiectnes of things, of which men made

made ſo much, account, as to damne themſelues to enioy them. What are metals but earth enuenomed, inſulphured, and accurſed?

What are Empires but clods of earth, which mē, like Auts diuide into Kingdome? What are honours but ſmoke, pleaſures but ordures, feaſts but ſlaughters, but murder, and meere lay-ſtals, & our ſtomacks but burying places for beaſts? Men, diuels, and wild monſters; our houſes, but churchyards, at leaſt hoſpitals, and true ſpittle houſes? He clearely knew the baſenes of Earthly greatnes, the ordinary precipices in the world, and eſpecially in the Courts of Princes where Vice walketh in triumph, dragging Vertues in chaynes like ſlaues; He ſaw gulphs, wherin he had a thouſand times been in daunger to drench the honour of his chaſtitie. That the leaſt act done for *God*, was more precious then al the world,

world. Finally he drew two maine consequences from al theſe verities; The one, that were he to be made monarch of two worlds, he would not daine ſo to aduãce one ſtep forward towards it. The other, that he had rather die, then the flower of his virginitie should be polluted, or quayled in any kind. Theſe ſweetneſſes are paſſed ouer, needs muſt he returne among Companie, but after this viſitation of God, men ſauoured ſo it with him, and life was ſo diſpleaſing to him, that he a thouſand times was vpon the point to forſake al, and looſe himſelf in the holy horrors of amorous ſolitude. He breathed nothing but hideous rocks, thickets of forreſts, and pleaſing hermitages; where heauen on euery ſide ſmileth, the aire is more pure then in Cities poiſoned with a thouſand vncleaneses; ſilence, Faſts, long contemplations, were his deareſt delights and moſt precious

precious deſires. But he in the meane time felt a ſtrong inſpiration, and he ſeemed to heare a voice from heauen, which ſaied; *Elzear* my ſonne I am wel pleaſed to ſee thee in this ſweet deſpaire, to be able to liue ſincerily in the world's impietie But courage ſõne, take Courage: *I know thy ſtrength, and what thou canſt doe: Confide in me, for I wil do al where in thou art vnable, and will ſupply al thy defects.* This voice infinitely comforted him and immediately he put on a reſolution during life to preſerue Virginitie, though maried very young and rich. This Viſion ſo mortifyed al his affections, and deep buried al deſire of worldly things, that neuer after loued this moſt vertuous Child any thing but God and his ſeruice. Life and death were matters ſo indifferent to him, that had he been put to his choice, he would neuer haue propended to the one or other, wholy reffering

referring himſelfe to God. But contrarywiſe, the fire of al manner of Concupiſcence was ſo throughly quenched, and the guift of chaſtitie ſo deeply characterized in his heart, that he feld no rebellion in his bodie. This which I tel you is very admirable, without precedent, and without temeritie neither can, nor ought to be imitated by anie.

He and his wife lay in one ſelf ſame chamber, yea commonly in the ſame bed: but he hath confeſſed, the more he approached to this chaſt Doue, the more he felt him-ſelf diſpoſed to Virginitie. He had no other fire, then this diuine Loue, al the reſt was ſnow, Ice, and puritie. Be not amazed at this paſſage of confidence, for IESVS CHRIST often appeared on their pillow, inſpiring them with thoughts of heauen, and preſeruing them from any other cogitations. It is ſayd the diamond being

being placed between the Loadſtone and Iron, neuer approach one to another, but looſe their attraction.

I doe not belieue euery Diamond hath this power, but I am aſſured *Ieſus Chriſt* hath it, and that really, which is the cauſe we muſt feare nothing, we being ſo well garded, and throughly aſſiſted. From thence it came that *Delphina* neuer called him either husband or ſpouſe, but her Angel-guardian, the Father of her ſoule and vertues, the protectour of her Virginitie, and her Corps du garde: ſo likewiſe to ſay truly, he had an incomparable care of it. For if in the night time any illuſion were ſo daring as to aſſaile him in ſleep his heart neuer drozy, but perpetually in ſentinel, reſiſted theſe imaginatiõs, but with ſuch zeale, that he awakening ſtarted at it, & drewe them away. So much, did he abhorr, not onely the fire, but the leaſt ſmoke of Luſt, the mortal

mortal enemie of his chaſtitie. It is ſaied the ſkin of a lamb, cannot brooke the neighbourhood eyther of the Wolfe, or his hide, and rather will fal in pieces, then ally with it. He was faine to abide with *Robert Duke of Calabria*, and with the other Princes ſonnes of *Charles* King of *Sicily*, who were at Aix.

Good God what a Martyrdome it was to him to liue in the Court; For commonly the aire there is ſo noyſome, that poore vertue vanisheth, nor can at al endure it. He heard a thouſand diſcourſes which killed him; Tongues the moſt ſlaunderous are very often the moſt acceptable at Court; There, vice is vertue, and vertue, vice. A man muſt be wicked, or at leaſt pretend it, to be accounted a gallant, otherwiſe he is held a ſot, a ſilly fellow, or a meere Monke. To forſweare menace, ſcoffe, blaſpheme, murmur, play

the

the Whore maiſter, inſult, are the ſeauen guifts of the Court ſpirit, much more gracious then the ſeauen guifts of the holy Ghoſt. Repreſent vnto your ſelfe the Torments of this poore lamb amongſt theſe rauenous Wolues, theſe Lyons, and Tygers. Al his refuge was to the night, for enioying the benefit of ſilence, he ſpent it in diuine contemplations, in teares, and disburdening his heart by a hundred and a hundred ſighes which he breathed towards heauen. He deceiued al the world, riſing at midnight, & retiring by ſtealth into ſome corner a part, where he euer found God, and the gates of heauen, opē. O God, what amorous colloquies! What languiſhing complaints, to behold himſelfe condemned to liue in the Purgatorie of Court, and amongſt theſe diuel-courtiers, who vtter nought but ordure. On a time being about midnight vnder a window quietly to behold

hold the heauens, he was taken in a great extasie: He knew the Abisse of Gods mercies, that he were a hundred fold damned, if the helpful hand of Gods infinite goodnes had not preserued him from it, that there is not any sinne whereinto Man is not precipitated, if God take not pittie of him; That Man is so poore a thing, that he, and nothing are al one; That this wretched life is nought but a miry bog of Calamities, and the sub-vrbes of Hell; He saw, that his sinnes which to himself seemed so litle, were in the eyes of God so great that his whole recourse was to a prostrate humilitie before his diuine Maiestie, and a total resignation to his most gracious providence. In the meane time two fountaines of teares distilled from his eyes, ere he was aware; so much he was transported. God comforted his poore seruant, and gaue him leaue to heare this voice from

from heauen. Elzear, Elzear, torment not thy ſelfe ſo much vpon the conſideration of thy ſinnes, nor plundge thy ſelfe in this gulph. My bountie (deare Sõne) is infinitely much greater then thy ſinnes; I ſweare vnto thee I neuer wil ſuffer thee to fal out of my fauour. It was wel for him that he at the ſame inſtant was tranſported, and out of himſelfe, or otherwiſe he had run the hazard to die with contentment, hearing this promiſe of ſo ineffable conſolation, and the wiſh of Saints, to wit, to be aſſured neuer to looſe Gods grace. Yet wholy becomming extatique, he began to crie out, O what aboũdance! O goodnes! Goodnes of my God. Alas! How litle art thou knowne. Ay me, would to God I might with the hazard of my life ſo preuaile that al men might know as clearely, and loue as ardently this inexhauſtible Ocean of mercie, and

this furnace of boundles charitie. Heauen, and Earth ! but who am I that God ſhould vouchſafe to thinke on me, and caſt his diuine eyes, on a wretched worme of putrid Earth? Amongſt theſe eiaculations behold him againe in an extaſie, and obſerue what he ſaw.

A goodly meadow couered ouer with a verdure infinitely, and delightfully freſh; diuerſifyed with a thouſand millions of moſt odoriferous flowers, enterlaced with a chriſtalline ſtreame which crept al along this delicious leuel.

In the midſt ſtood a Church very ſpacious and beautiful, the meaneſt thing therein was the marble, the luſtre of gold, an the draughts of Aſure, and vermillion; In the midſt was the high Aultar al glittering with gold & precious ſtones. There was a very venerable man, Papally veſted in Pontificalibus

ficalibus ready to say Masse, waited on by a Clergy al clothed in tissued satin, and vestments extraordinary sumptuous, an infinite number of people were present at this solemne Masse, a Quire of musick, or rather Choristers of Heauen, & of the holy Chappel of Paradise were ranked round about the pulpit, and the Eagle. Instantly they thundred out the Introit of the Masse with a harmonie able to kil, or rather indeed to raise the dead. The words were these *Nos autem gloriari oportet in Cruce Domini nostri* IESV-CHRISTI, &c. (For the Masse of the Inuention of the Crosse was saied;) & they proceeded through out the Masse with such a tone, to wit, al one as in Paradise, with vnspeakeable sweetnes. He beheld the people transported with deuotion, and it seemed to him he saw in the hearts of this

companie al the dolorous and bloudy miſteryes of the moſt bitter paſſion of *Ieſus Chriſt* to be renewed, and to the life repreſented. In the meane time his two eyes guſhed out teares like two ſtreames, powring forth a deluge of vnſpeakeable delights; Thē he felt al the myſteries of the amorous paſſion of *Ieſus Chriſt* to be engrauen in the moſt ſenſible part of his heart; a thing ſo wel imprinted in his ſoule, that he neuer forgat this fauour whilſt he liued. Al his pleaſure was to ſpeake of the paſſion, and to ſuffer ſomething, to imitate his Maiſter. He became an vnſhaken rock, not moued at al either for ſcoffs of the Court, for calumnies, or any thing which happened how ſharpe ſoeuer it were, and to any other, but himſelf inſupportable. He loued both his enemies, and the enuious, and al his delight was to thinke with himſelfe that

that in the end our Sauiour would exalt his ſighes and do him the honour to mediate the Palme of Martyrdome for him, that he might render him bodie for bodie, bloud for bloud, and life for life. This viſion continued til breake of day; in ſuch ſort that their Highneſſes Phiſitian going to bid the young Princes good morrow as he walked along, ſaw *Elzear*, at the window; He went and ſaluted him; *Elzear* ſpake not a word; The other replieth; He was ſtil ſilent. He pulled him by the lap of his night-gowne: yet ſaied he nothing. The Phiſitian amazed, cried out ſo lowd, that he came to himſelf. At which time the young *Lord* fetching three deep ſighes from the bottome of his heart. *Ah ſweet IESVS* (ſaid he) *and where am I?* The Phiſitian ſeing him al-bedewed with teares, aſſiſted him, and led him into his chamber. It is very likely he

coniu-

coniured him to say nothing, & freindly to keep this secret concealed. But (good God) what tales were made of it at Court, and what torment must this poore Count suffer, who was a much better Courtier of heauen, then earth, In the end al was knowne by the Confessor; for he opened vnto him al the corners of his heart, and fearing to be deceiued told him both the good and Euil which passed in his soule, that he might be instructed, & not stand exposed to illusions, wel knowing the euil spirit is often transformed into an Angel, and very often deceiueth those who confide in themselues.

Notable Maximes for the practiſe of vertue which S. Elzear learnt from God.

Chap. V.

God who had ſelected this faire ſoule to cõmunicate his fauour vnto, finding him very faithful, one after an other afforded him many lights from heauen, & enkindled in his breaſt a thouſand & thouſand flames of true charity: many times he ſpent whole nights in colloquyes with God; ſometimes he was found al bathed in teares, ſometime his face radiant like the ſun, and diſſipating the darknes of night with the rayes of his viſage: but he made not ſo much account of theſe fauours of viſions

ſions, and high contemplations, as of the practiſe of moſt ſolid vertues; He therefore ſaied.

1. That when a heart hath once taſted the ineffable bountie of God, and the greatnes of eternal life, it was impoſſible to loue any thing, but *God.*

2. That it is not to be imagined, how much God deſireth to do vs good, when he findeth hearts wel diſpoſed, and which wil be loyal to him: But (out alas.) ſome, litle or nothing regard God; Others (verily) receiue his fauours, but Thieues as they are, They ſteale glorie from God, and become very inſolent and proud.

3. It is prodigious, that men ſhould beliene what they beliene and liue as they liue; a beliefe wholy diuine, and a life meerely brutiſh. Thinke you, mortals beliene and Eternitie either of good or euil, ſince for one momentary pleaſure they forſake God, and deuote

deuote themſelues to the diuel by their exorbitant liues? The tongue of an Angel, Hand of a Harpy, Hart of a Dragon, what a hideous monſter is it?

4. Good God; ſaied he, what an inexcuſeable wrong do we to the goodnes of our Sauiour, who ſo much ſeeketh to do vs good, & findeth almoſt none, that wil entertaine it. He askes but two things of vs, to wit, puritie of heart, and an humble ſoule.

5. The more ſolid knowledge a man hath of God, the leſſe can he diſcourſe of his immortal greatnes. There is neither word can teach it, nor creature vnder heauen, to which it may be compared, al creatures are of ſo ſlight a value, that one is ashamed of their wretchednes, when God is throughly looked on. Alas! *S. Paul* cõming from heauen had very great reaſon when he ſayd there was neither tongue, hart, nor ſoule able to tel what he had ſeen.

They

They who talke moſt of God, are ſuch as commonly leaſt loue him. Al their Vertues vapoureth out in babble, and is exhaled in the ſmoke of Words.

6. The true booke of perfection, is not ſublime contemplations of the greatnes of God, of his Omnipotẽcie, of his ineffable maieſtie; that, more properly is the Obiect of the bleſſed, and is matter of amuſement many times for idle ſpirits, But the true book of perfection, is the ſuffering of *Ieſus Chriſt*, the pouertie of his Crib, the penurie of his life, the profound humilitie, of his heart, the deſire to ſaue al the world, his bowels repleniſhed with charitie, his Obedience, his Death on the Croſſe, his inuincible patience, his bloud powred forth to the laſt drop, his precious bodie giuen for food, and expoſed to a thouſand outrages, and a thouſand indignities. Can one belieue this, and thinke ſe-

riouſly of it, & after it offend ſo good a God, yea offend him mortally. Ah God graunt I die (ſaid he with teares) die a thouſand deaths, yea deaths moſt rigorous, rather then at any time commit one ſole mortal ſinne, againſt ſo good a God?

7. Nothing ſo much grieues my heart, as to ſee the litle accoût wicked men make of the feruours of the loue of IESVS-CHRIST: Out Alas muſt we daily pierce a new his innocent heart, and open againe his bleeding wounds, and euery day nayle him to the Croſſe by our exorbitant, & truly infernal liues?

8. A great and moſt aſſured meanes of ſaluation is to be a good ſeruant of the holy Mother of God, ſhe hath an incredible power, and wil, to ſuccour vs, to the vtmoſt of her abilitie. That men are vtterly abandoned both of ſenſe and reaſon, who hauing the power

power ſo ~~eaſily abandoned both of ſenſe and reaſon, who hauing the power ſo~~ eaſily to gaine Paradiſe, ſo litle diſpoſe themſelues to do it.

9. Humilitie; chaſtitie; obedience, and charitie are the fower cardinal vertues of ſpiritual life.

10. A true note to diſcerne ſoules, which aduãce towards vertue, is when one no longer takes pleaſure in the world, and that al therein taſteth il; for in the ſame proportion as heauen is ſweet, the Earth becomes bitter, and troubleſome to vs.

11. When of neceſſitie we muſt be among libertines, and euil companie, make prouiſion of Antidotes, and counterpoyſons; Caſt into your heart ſome good thought, which you shall reuolue in your ſoule, whilſt others play the fooles, make prouiſion of ſome praiers liuely, short, and cordial, and dart them often towards heauen

heauen. Suger the viands of feaſts with a litle gal of the paſſion of *Ieſus Chriſt*; If you muſt daunce, put a litle grauel into your ſhooes, and ſome ſmal pibles; that, wil help you in one and the ſame inſtant to ſatisfie both God and the World. If you muſt be often in the companie of Women, arme your ſelfe with the corſelet of a good haire-shirt, at the leaſt of ſome rough girdle, which wil countergard your heart, and rebate the point of darts, which would otherwiſe transfix your ſoule.

Now this *Young man* ſpake, what he practiſed, and when during the day-time he had not meanes to do his dutie, al the night he attended to God, and himſelfe, and might truly ſay; *night was the day of his deareſt delights.*

God

God reuealeth the greatnes of the holy Count's vertues.

CHAP. VI.

THE more Saints seeke to conceale their perfectiõs vnder a cloude of true humilitie, the more God is pleased to make these bright suns breake forth, & to expose them to the admiration of the world. *Garsenda Dalphant* was one of his nurses & gouernesses; a most noble Lady, and very chast, who had likewise in her husbands life, made a vow of chastitie with him. She was most eminent in vertue, & had often receiued the fauour from heauen to foretel things to come, and to haue many notable

notable illuminations: As she bred this young Count from his cradle, so (to say truely) she tendred him as her owne heart, or the apple of her eye. Which was the cause she oftentimes praied hartily to God for him. Once among the rest vnfolding her heart before God, and with scalding teares praying for her deare *Elzear*, she heard a shril voice [redacted], which spake in this manner, (Daughter) be not afflicted for this young man, whom thou with so much affection recommendest to me, I loue him better then thou dost, and haue appointed my owne Mother to be his Mistresse. Can he be in a better hand, or may I shew more care of his saluation, then I haue done? The poore Woman was afraid, but it was a holy feare, hearing a [redacted] so to speake. A while after recollecting her selfe, and taking courage

rage, she saied; (Sweet Iesus) If this voice which I heare be an illusion, suffer not they poore seruants to be so deceiued. Alas) too well I know the frailtie of my sexe; nor do I at al confide therein! But I beg of thee, yea with al the affections of my soule, if it come from thee, thou (Lord) wilt vouchsafe to redouble thy fauours, & let me vnderstand thy holy wil. The next day, then, being at [illegible] she heard these expresse words, (Daughter) what I saied yesterday, confidently hold vndoubted, and as comming from me: Effects shal ratifie my promise. The vertuous Woman trusted not al this, wel enough knowing the craft of the wicked spirit, who oftentimes transformes himselfe into an Angel. She went and sought out Elzears Confessor, and sincerely related the matter to him; He (good man) mildly vrged his penitent, and speaking

king with him of many things, in the end made him confeſſe, that he had a filial and cordial confidence in the holy Mother of God, that the poore offerigs he could make to God he did it by the virginal hands of this Lady of his heart; That the reaſon why he had almoſt no diſtractiõs in his praiers was, that before he began them he accuſtomed affectionately to addreſſe himſelfe to the Queene of Angels, humbly beſeeching her to put into his heart, that, which might be moſt acceptable both to her deare ſonne, and her, and for this purpoſe ſaied one *Aue Maria* to her. I wil not denie (ſaied he) Deare Father) but that ſo ſoone as it is ſayd in that manner, I ſenſibly feele my heart (as it were) raiſed to heauen; I ſee infinite matter of meditations and haue my ſpirit ſo ſtrongly tied to it, and ſo much comforted, that I do not thinke there is

vnder heauen any pleaſure comparable to it. I make account that being moſt vnworthy to preſent ought to the great God of heauen and Earth, I cannot do better (Wretch that I am) then to put that litle I do into the hands of the moſt worthy Mother of God. I find my ſelfe ſo wel in ſo doing, that it is wholy impoſſible to chaunge this courſe, & to make other addreſſes. So ſoone as I knock at this gate of heauen, it ſeemes to me al Paradiſe openeth, and on euery ſide ſmiles on me in honour of this Princeſſe of Seraphins, who deigneth to humble her ſelfe ſo low as to reflect a fauourable eye towards me. They who nearely obſerued the actions of this holy Count, ſaw, he with extraordinary care prepared for al the Vigils of our Lady; yea he kept them with great deuotion: and himſelfe perceiued that the Saturday nights dedicated

ted to the holy Mother of God, on the nights betweene the Vigils, and the feasts, and on the daies of her festiuals, he receiued extraordinary fauours, very great lights, and Visits ful of happynes, and superceleſtial comfort.

The firſt, and ſtrongeſt viſion which totally chaunged his ſoule, and which killed the world in his heart, happened vnto him on the very day of the *Aſſumption of our Lady*: when he talked of her it wel appeared it was his heart diſcourſed, his eies deliuered the reſt, & his mouth was that, which ſpake leaſt. If you would pleaſe him, you muſt talke of the *Virgin Mary*, teach him ſome manner of deuotion, and ſhew him the way how to yeild her ſome great, and acceptable ſeruice: Behold his cheife ambition, and moſt precious delights. One day that *Garſenda* recõmended this her Nurſe-

child to God, in the chappel of *S. Catharine* in the caſtle of *Anſois*; she had an admirable viſion: She ſaw an arme iſſuing forth of a bright and tranſparent cloude, and a hand holding a precious ſtone in it, which caſt forth a liuely luſtre, and moſt reſplendent raies, in ſuch ſort that the chappel ſeemed al on fire; a holy feare made her heart to tremble beholding ſo ſtraung a noueltie. Amongſt thoſe amazements she had recourſe to *God*, fearing to be abuſed by ſome vaine illuſion; Behold a voice breakes out of the cloude, ſpeaking alowd and clearely. This Diamond ſo ſparkling is the Virginitie of *Elzear*, for whom thou now praieſt: He shal be one of the goodly lights of the world: But looke better on this ſtone, that thou maiſt know how beautiful. *Elzear* is before the eies of God: ſpeaking this the hand turned the ſtone; shewing

it

it on al ſides , at which time ſuch aboundance of raies and lights came out of it, that the poore Woman being aſtonished, was forced to hold both her hands on her eies , vnable to endure the violence of theſe exceſſiue flames , and this eminent beautie , ſo that lowdly crying out. O God (quoth she) what ſplendour, what beautie; Ay me, what admirable beautie. In the ſame inſtant God manifeſted the perfection of the holy Coũt to others of great ſanctitie ; (*Mablina* a noble Lady , and a Widow of much puritie, and a true Turtle (who had extraordinary , and ſolid fauours from God. *Mablina* , I ſay , one day ſaw a large feild al couered ouer with ſweetneſſe, and ſprinkled with a hundred thouſand flowers; There appeared a young man beautiful as a Seraphin , shining like a ſun clothed with cloth of gold and ſiluer; He bare a rich ſtandard depainted

painted with golden flames, and so radiant, that the ayre round about, was therewith al on fire. He walked along with a slow pace, and a port ful of maiestie; after followed an infinite number of persons of al ages, sex and qualitie. There you might see by fowre, and fowre litle innocents to march along attired al in white, attended by heauenly Damsels, beautiful as Archangels, clothed in white satin embrodered with liuely flowers: Then Widowes most chast and modest, al of them with palmes in hand? Lastly men and women, Potentates, and Monarcks, Popes, and Cardinals; a million of people, one much fairer then another, and verily a man would haue thought Paradise had been descéded on Earth. He which euer beheld a Woman amazed, might looke vpon the chast *Mablina*, who transported with vnspeakeable ioye could not be satisfyed

began to quake, a thouſand thoughts, a thouſand apprehẽſiõs paſſéd through her mind: A ſmal matter tarmiſheth a chryſtal, and quite breakes it, a litle thing diſſolueth ſnow, which is reflected on by the rayes of the ſun, and ſo eaſily withereth the roſe innocently blooming on the buſh that I muſt cõfeſſe I can not be angry with Garſenda, ſeing ſhe had ſo iuſt a feare; ſhe obſerues, and lookes through the key hole to eſpy whither this yoũg couple, were yet, ſo late, and ſo contrary to their cuſtome in bed. O great fauour from heauen: O vnſpeakeable ioy for poore Garſenda; ſhe beheld them both in their virginal bed faſt a-ſleep, and being in their firſt and ſowndeſt ſleep they ſeemed two Cherubins placed vpon an Arche, which ſupported a true Angel of heauen: verily ſhe ſaw a bright Angel who ſmiling, and beholding thẽ with a gratious ey, held both his

his hands ouer their heads, ſhewing to haue a great care to defend them, and not to ſuffer one ſole thought to ariſe in their ſoules, vnworthy of their Virginity. This viſion vnlocked her heart, and wide opened it! Ah ſayth ſhe, I cannot feare any longer, euil may befal them whom I ſo wel loue, ſince heauen hath had ſo particular a care of them and that their Angel-guardians preſerue them with ſuch, and ſo great charity, as to hold the hand of their protection ouer their heads. But it is fit I tell you the cauſe why they roſe ſo late, the trueth is they ſpent the reſt of the night in holy prayers, & tender colloquyes with God, bemoaning the time loſt in theſe feaſtes, and idle dauncings, which vndoubtely were to them a meere Martyrdome and a kind of Purgatory.

The Gouernment of his Family, and the newu Decalogue he gaue his houshold Seruants.

CHAP. VII.

THE vertue of *Elzear* hath hitherto been in minority, now when he is twentie yeares of age, we muſt take him out of pupillage. His parẽts could not liue without him, and he aſpired to no other greatnes, but to ſee himſelfe freed from a thouſand domeſtical, and very troubleſome captiuities, wherevnto he ſaw vertue enthralled: parents by redoubled curioſities very often choke the vertue of their children, & like

like, Apes by ouer-much dandling them, ſtrangle them. This young *Lord*, ſo much importuned his parents that in the end they permitted him to viſit the houſes of his wife, there to prepare a new forme of houſe keeping in his owne manner. He made choice of *Puits-Michel*, to reſide in, and being a good Sõne of a family, became a braue father of a family. The ſage-ſots of the world belieue vertue is meer Hypocriſy, & that deuout ſoules, are altogether lazy, & nothing apt for employments: They thinke they know nothing but to ſay their beades, and to make a lowd noiſe with *Kyrie Eleyſons*, and petty ſuffrages, and that otherwiſe there is not any thing ſo doltiſh or ſilly as theſe exteriourly pious, who heare two Maſſes a day, & ſuffer themſelues to be gulled, like meere Buffles. But he is very fooliſh, who entertaines this beleife; For it is vndoubted,

ſolid

ſolid Vertue is of it ſelfe alone able to do buſines, and to diſpatch it wel. It alone taught *Moyſes* to be Lieutenant, General of the armies of God the Creatour; *Ioſue*, to be a Camp-Maiſter; *Dauid* to be a braue Captaine, the *Machabees* to be inuincible ſoldiers; It taught *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Iacob*, to be good houſkeepers, and excellent Fathers of familyes; For Iacob out of nothing, and by his owne induſtrie made his houſe very rich. You inſtantly ſhal behold *Elzear*, order his new family ſo happily, that it ſhal be a patterne for others. Firſt he framed a new Decalogue, which he deliuered to his houſhold ſeruants, commaunding it ſhould be obſerued, and that inuiolably. See what it is.

1. Al my people ſhal daily heare Maſſe, & neuer faile, what buſines ſo euer they haue. If God be wel ſerued in my houſe, I can not feare any thing wil be wanting.

2 Let

2. Let none be ſo hardie, as to dare in my houſe, either to ſweare or blaſpheme the holy name of God, or his bleſſed Mother; nor to for ſweare, or giue himſelf to the diuel; For the leaſt may happen to this miſerable man, is that I wil moſt ſeuerely chaſtice him, and then ſhamefully turne him away; Can I hope that God wil powre his heauenly benedictions on my houſe, if it be filled with ſuch ſcummy people, who at euerie word vow themſelues to al the diuels, or who take God by the feet and head, making our hayre ſtand on end with horrour. Likewiſe can I endure thoſe ſtinking mouths, which inceſſantly belch forth a thouſand impurities, and words ſo fowle not poſſibly to be tolerated. The rudde rabble of Lackeys infecteth houſes, and poiſoneth the ſoules of ſuch as haue one dram of vertue in them.

Yet muſt I let you ſee the ſweet ri-

gour

gour of this good Count, & acquaint you with the petty Iuſtice he excercized vpon thoſe domeſtique offenders; For to go by degrees, for the firſt time that any of his people were accuſed to him, & that he cõfeſſed he had ſworne ſodainly or blaſphemed againſt the name of God through impatience, he impriſoned him in ſome cloſe chamber of his Caſtle, and there made him faſt, ſowndly giuing him nought but cold water, & hard bread but the party muſt take heede he dallyed not with his patience, for if he ſaw him, too often to returne to it he turned him away, and baniſhed ſuch baſe rabble from his houſe as vnworthy there of. One would ſay he had no anger, but of a lambe, or a doue: where the honor of God was touched. *Elzear* made no difference of perſons, and needs muſt one reſolue, neuer to erre obſtinately, or breake with him.

3. That al esteeme wel of honour & chastitie, and that none imagine *Elzear*, can suffer, the least impuritie of the World in his castle; who soeuer he be that stumbleth in this down-hil, he may wel cast vp his reckonings neuer to be in my bookes againe. What! That God condemne me for breeding vp Villaines in my house, and that of fat hogs, or men who liue like beasts; It is a thing neuer to be hoped for of me, nay let me rather die.

4. That euerie weeke at least both men and women cõfessed their sinnes. But if any one be so vnhappy as not to communicate on the principall feastes of the yeare to wit Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, our Lady dayes, let him be sure, he shall quickly be gon for I will neuer endure that my house be open to such as make so litle account of God, and of their owne soules. I wel know man is man; I freely affirm

affirme we al are ſinners, and that the beſt in the world walking vpon the Ice of this miſerable life, ſlip at the leaſt ſeauen times a day, and many times take very heauie fals; which I much compaſſionate: For my ſelfe Alas, I am the moſt miſerable of men, and the greateſt ſinner. But to wallow in vice, and to cherish your ſinnes, not willing to leaue the mire; Is that which I neither wish either for my ſelfe, or mine. I wil commaund nothing, which I wil not firſt do; I am better pleaſed, that my hands be looked on, then my tongue or words. What an impudence were it I ſhould deſire none in my houſe to ſweare, and my ſelfe do nothing al day but forſweare my chriſome and Baptiſme.

5. That there be no lazie people in my houſe: In the morning (then) the firſt thing ſhal be, that euery one lift vp his heart to God, and inuoke his

holy ſpirit, that offer be made to God of that muſt be done al the day after, ſo gilding al actions with the ſacred gold of good intentions; & then euerie one go to his peculiar emploiment, and do his office, with much exactnes. Whilſt men ſeriouſly labour abroad, let Women ſtay at home, each one at their worke. We may wel afford them a litle more time in the morning to ſay al their praiers at ful: but vnder colour of meditation or deuotion, they muſt not ſtand amuzed in Idlenes. To pray wel, wel to take paines, to labour hard, to be very modeſt and obedient, and to take great care of the houshold, is the life of a pious woman, as the holy Ghoſt depainted vnto vs in the holy ſcriptures. Take away theſe glorious, and idle ſpirits, which are perpetually in ſilence in the Church to avoid the buſie employments of the houſe; It is not

that

that they ſo wel loue contemplation, but that they greatly deſire to haue their worke done for them. The diuine *Apoſtle*, ſaieth lowd and clearely, that he who laboureth not, muſt not eate, & that himſelfe by ſtrength of armes got his poore liuing, yet deſerued in the meane time to be fed with manna.

6. I wil not haue in my houſe dice-plaiers, carders, nor thoſe kind of Tiplers, who liue for nothing but to play, to ſweare, to deceiue, to be drunke, and make good cheer. Al this rabble ſerues for nothing but vnhappines in a houſe. There are a thouſand innocent pleaſures, which may ſerue to paſſe the time; which paſſeth away ſoone enough, although we shoue it not hence with our shoulders. No, I deſire not my caſtle to be a cloiſter, nor my people Hermits, let them laugh, let them game, let them ſpend their time; yet verily I would haue it

ſo,

ſo, but neuer at the expẽce of God & their conſcience. What should a raſcal, a Rogue, a whore Maiſter, a cheather, and a heap of demy-Atheiſts do in an honourable family.

7. That peace be perpetually in my houſe, for where peace is, there is God & where diſorders & ſuſpitions raigne, familyes are turned topſey-turvey; ſo many enuies, ſo many falſe rumours, ſo many ſlaunders, & ſo many ſtabs; make ſomewhat ſtil to be repaired. Of one family, two armies of ſoldiers are created, who are continually in ſentinel and ambuſh to ſurprize & diſmount one an other.

The Maiſter is beſieged by theſe two Court-of Gards, who watch al occaſions to do their buſines at their Maiſters charge. So that inſtead of being ſerued, needs muſt he be aſſaulted by al, and be in perpetual combat, hauing his heart oft trãsfixed with a thouſand arrowes

arrowes of tõgues,& his eares, cloyed with a hundred thouſand troubleſome, lying,and poiſoned diſcourſes; In ſuch ſort, that he to his great greife finds the truth of that old Prouerbe, which ſayth; ſo many ſeruants,ſo many thieues; but we much better ſay; In euery bad ſeruant there is an armie to fight againſt,an armie of vices and diſloyalties (ſauing the honour of the God, for by the grace of God there are ſuch of them) & who carrie out their value in gold: But as for the bad He is a Lier, a riotter,a Thiefe, a gourmander, a vaunter,lazie,diſorderly,a ſlaunderer, a gameſter, a drunkard, a blaſphemer, a babbler,and very vulturs,who mind nothing but to fal vpon carcaſes, to teare them in pieces, and to make a prey of the goods of their Maiſter, who dares not truſt anie of them, but with the diſtruſt of al the world, who is in houſe as in a Trench beſieged round

round about by enemies. For my part, I desire my house be free from such people, who loue nothing but noise, and who breath nothing but the ayre of stormes, and onely drinke in a troubled water. Whosoeuer wil wel serue God, shal be my deare seruant, he who wil be an enemie of God, shal also be mine, nor wil I euer endure him in my house.

8. If by mischaunce, anie difference or quarrel happen, I ordaine that what the holy *Apostle*, sayd, may be inuiolably obserued. To wit, that the sun set not, but we in the same instant cause Anger, and al manner of acerbitie to be layd in the tomb of forgetfulnes. I wel enough know the impossibilitie of liuing among men, and not to haue somewhat to suffer: scarcely doth man accord with himselfe one whole day. The bodie incessantly contendeth against the spirit; Bodie against Bodie,

and

humour againſt humour, and ordinarily our thoughts oppoſe one another, and were it not for reſpect we would willingly fight within our ſelues, when deſpite, greife, vehement anger ſurprizeth vs, or indeed thoſe melancholy humours, (which render vs ſo extremely anxious) that we wel know not, what vve our ſelues would haue. Shal we then if men of humours ſo giddy, and with ſuch antipathy, from time to time fal together by the eares, and eagerly fight with tongues? To trāſgreſſe, is humane: To reuenge, is brutiſh, not to be willing to pardon, diabolical: To pardon, Apoſtolical: To loue an Enemie, Angelical: To render good for euil, is verily a true Touch of God, yea of the very Sonne of God. Now ſee heere my people natiuely behold here thoſe to whom my houſe, my purſe, & heart ſhal euer be open, and hauing ſuch ſeruants I am willing

they

they be my Maiſters.

9. Euerie Euening I intend al my family be in an open place, where I wil haue ſome one to ſpeake a litle of God, of the ſaluation of ſoules, of gaining Paradiſe. What a ſhame is it! That we being in the world onely to purchaſe Paradiſe (wretches that we are!) do ſcarcely talke of it, ſcarcely thinke we of it once in a day. O life il employed! O Trauels, il diſpoſed! Day & night we ſweate, we die a thouſand deaths, we yield vp to the Earth our loues, liues, carts, oxen, and horſes to eate, drinke, and ſnore; Money, houſes, pleaſures, and a thouſand ſuch like follies are al our emploiments; but of the Eternitie of the beautiful Paradiſe, of the great God of heauen, neuer, neuer ſeriouſly do we thinke, neuer ſpeake we of it but at randome, nay ſcarcely do we belieue it. I wil ſo handle the matter this brutiſhnes ſhal not be imputed

puted to me, I therefore ordaine and wil haue it ſo, that once euerie day at a conuenient houre they heare ſomewhat of God; & that each one learne the way how to ſaue his ſoule. Diſcourſes of heauen inuite vs to vertue, and diſrelliſh the daungerous pleaſures of the world. What meanes wil there be to loue God, if we neuer ſpeake of him? What meanes to ſpeake of him, if we be not thereto enforced by an amorous conſtraint? you then ſhal ſee me to be daily the foremoſt, nor wil I haue anie to be abſent from this holy exerciſe vnder colour of diſpatching my affaires. I haue not anie buſines which more nearely toucheth my heart, then to cooperate to the ſaluation of al ſuch as ſerue me. They al haue giuen themſelues to me, & I reſigne al to God, Maiſter, and ſeruants, and al which is in my power.

10. Laſtly I moſt expreſſely commaund

maund that none of my houſe offend anie man either in goods, or honour, nor that vnder colour of doing my buſines my poore dependents be ruined: No, I wil not that to fill my coffers, theirs be emptied, or that to encreaſe my reuenew, and purſe, bloud be wrung out of their veynes, and their bones be broken to ſuck out the marrow. Fy vpon thoſe wicked ſeruants, who to enrich their Maiſters, damne both Maiſters and ſeruants. Auant thoſe bloud-ſuckers, who ſqueeſe out the ſubſtance of the poore, to fatten great ones. Do you imagine the Maiſter who giues fiue shillings of almes, venteth away the theft of his ſeruants, who haue torne out the entrailes of poore people, who crie for vengeance to God and heauen. I deſire al be reſtored which appertaineth not to me, I had rather go in my shirt into Paradiſe, then al clothed with gold and hu-

and ſcarlet to be dragged along into the ſulphurous pits of hell, where the euil rich man enragedly crieth out for thirſt, and calleth for helpe and water. We shal be wealthy enough if we wil feare God. Other mens goods gnaw ours, and conſume them inſenſibly. Great familyes many times fal in an inſtant, becauſe other mens goods therein, do like fire by force hidden vnder the earth, it heats when we leaſt thinke of it, troubles vs, and hauing made al the earth to ſhake, rents al, waſteth al, and flyes aloft aboue the aire, hauing throwne them downe who (maugre) it, had ſought to confine it. Let double be reſtored, yea fower-fold, if I haue any thing, which is an others. Let my houſe be open on euery ſide and diſcouered to al Suns, that each one may ſee his way to the center; and if any therein obſerue ought which may appertaine to him

him; I releaſe it, and deſire he reſume it. A man who hath his treaſures in heauen, and in the coffers of Eternitie shal he amuſe himſelfe in the durt of the Earth, & in the vnhappy bleſſings of this tranſitorie and inconſtãt life? I came altogether naked out of my Mothers wõb, I shal quickly returne into the belly of an other mother al naked and ſtinking! Alas; for a moment of life, which is between theſe two tombes, muſt I hazard the ſaluation of my ſoule capable of Eternitie? Good God, a man should be vtterly ſenſles; faith, vertũe, and reaſon would be wholy eccliplſed, and al vnderſtanding blaſted and deſtroyed.

This is the Decalogue, which this moſt worthy man gaue to his family: but he had a moſt ſublime guift from God, to wit, that his words were as shafts, and flames of fire. He imprinted on hearts what he pleaſed; and

almoſt

almoſt not a man heard him ſpeake, who felt not (I know not what kind of tenderneſs) : ſome diſſolued into teares before him, as ſnow ſtrooken with the powerful rayes of the ſun. He enkindled a thouſand good deſires in the breaſt of thoſe who were in his companie. The Iuice of his ſacred diſcourſes, and the iſſue of them were theſe fiue things! That aboue al *God* muſt be feared, but with an amorous and filial feare. 2. That well to pray to God, beginning muſt bemade by conſideration of your owne defects, and thence to deriue a great confuſion & a lowly humilitie. That the prayers of one truly humble, and ſunke into the center of his Nothing, is an enflamed dart shot directly into the heart of God, which penetrateth through al the heauens, & hath a petty Omnipotencie in heauen. For how can any thing (ſayd he) be denied to a

heart

heart, which is perfectly humble.

3. That the greateſt care of euery one ought to be the loue of God, who ſo much hath loued vs as to looſe his own life in the opprobries of the Croſſe, that we might not be loſt in the accurſed Abiſſes of hel: But he ſpake it with an accent, with a Countenãce, with a heart al on fire, in ſuch ſort that it enflamed al, ſuch as had the happines to heare his holy diſcourſe. 4. That in ſuch meaſure as our hearts and bodie are chaſt, God would multiplie his mercies on vs, for he infinitely loueth puritie, and powreth the treaſures of his graces into our boſome. 5. That much endeauour be vſed mutually to loue, and ſuffer one an other, perfection conſiſting in this point to vnderſtand how to tolerate, and couer the defects of an other, ſince the *Apoſtle* calleth this Vertue of Abridgement, & a Summarie of al perfection.

The

The Condition of his family, and his particular actions in this new-houſekeeping.

CHAP. VIII.

KNOVV right wel, your heart flies before you, & paſſionately deſireth to ſee the iſſue of al theſe excellent diſcourſes. We but too often ſee Maiſters who ſpeake gold, whilſt their people are al Iron, ſo that many times the Maiſter is an Angel, and the ſeruant a diuel; Theſe are *S. Michaels*, aboue there is an Archangel, vnder foote are euil ſpirits, ſo many ſeruants are ſo many ſots. We heare many ſpeake like *S. Paul*, & liue like *Iudas* onely ayming at profit, and

their own accõmodation. But *S. Elzear* goes an other way; He ſayth what he doth; He doth more then he ſayth: He ſpeakes but to halues, his hands, eyes, and heart make vp the reſt. His heart and tongue act one and the ſame part, and his hand is the interpreter of his ſoule. It is moſt true, one muſt haue a hũdred hands to performe the ſublime perfections of his deſires, and Seraphical affections. His family therefore was ſo wel ordered, that al which *Plato* ſaw in Idea, was beheld in this houſe of God. It was the family of Vertues and graces, and as it was heretofore ſayd of an other: His ſoldiers, were as *Machabees*, his Gentlemen as litle *Ioſues*, *Ioſephs*, & *Mardocheuſes*; Women, *Suſannaes*, *Heſters*, *Iudiths*; al his ſeruants honeſt, & remarkeable in ſome vertue. Sweet peace was among them, Freindſhip more then fraternal, great maturitie and integritie in al their

words

words and actions; Extraordinary puritie, no wanton speeches, no fowle & nasty discourses, no blasphemies nor periuries, no Court Aire, or taunts poignant, and intemperate, no quarrels: breifly like Maister, like men.

That which made *Alexanders* Court so admirable, was that al the Lords of Court were almost euerie one of them *Alexanders*; In *Elzears* house, al the world seemeth *Elzear* or at least resembles him. Could you imagine that many men of armes made there a vow of chastitie, many young gentlemen there vowed perpetual virginitie, the nearer they approached to *Elzears* person, the more they felt the flames of concupiscence to be mortified, and they became the further in loue with continencie. It is saied that such as touch or lie neare vnto the leaues of the tree called *Agnus Castus*, do sensibly perceiue euil flames to be

quenched in their bodies, and to be rendered chaſt. So that the Caſtle of *Puits-Michel* to ſay truly ſeemed a noble Monaſterie replenished with religious, Clothed like Courtiers; many vnder Crimſon ſattin doublets hid rough Haire shirts, yet boaſted it not, many gaue their money to the poore, inſtead of playing at dice, and that which is admirable many faſted in the midſt of feaſts, a matter much more difficult, then in Wilderneſſes, and in the meane time ſet a good face on it at the Table, caruing, ſeruing, and giuing to al, entertayning al the world, ſo that it ſeemed al were merry, whilſt they faſted. So exceedingly it importeth that the Maiſter of the houſe giue good example to his family. In this Court was *Alaſia*, a religious Woman, ſiſter to the good. Counteſſe *Delphina* wife of *Elzear*; ſhe confeſſed very often, ſhe more pro-

profited in this Court, then in her Monasterie, that she had fewer, and more light temptations, & that when she was assayled by some illusion, she had a very powerful remedie ready at hand. It was permitted by God that she on a time was assaulted by a strong temptation against her chastitie. This perilous counterbuffe lasted not long; I pray see to what Saint she, vowed her selfe, and to what Aultar she made he stations to gaine Indulgence, and to free her soule from these euil flames; She secretly went into *Elzear's* chamber, at an howre, when neither he, nor anie other was in it, she fetched three turnes about his virginal bed, but did it on her knees, creeping round about with much confidence, then lifting vp her eies and hands towards heauen, from the bottome of her heart she saied. Sweet IESVS King of Virgins, and Spouse of chast soules

les, I moſt humbly beſeech thee for the Angelical puritie which is obſerued in this holy bed, to deliuer me from the sharpe thorne which pierceth my heart, and from the curſed temptation which vexeth my ſoule. It is a ſtrang thing! She had no ſooner ended her praier, but that she felt the Dragon burſt which enflamed her heart, and the whole temptation to vanish, but it was with ſuch aboundance of grace, that neuer was she afterward beſieged by theſe hideous thoughts; what she had heretofore apprehended as huge mountaines; she blew away afterward as buſy flies, and onely laughed at them. Out of their ſchoole of vertue came many eminent in ſanctitie of life.

But we muſt behold what life himſelfe led, who (verily) was the pattern of his Court:) ſage worldlings belieue that to gaine reputation a man muſt looke

looke big, play the *Vespasian*, or the Sarrazin, sweare, strike, menace al the world, and become a litle Tirant, despizing vertue and deuotion, as things inferiour, and fit for women, & weake spirits. Truly, to play the Turke, and to make ones selfe be thought a fierce *Olibrius*, were a braue busines, yet would it be scorned: but to belieue in IESVS-CHRIST, and liue like a diuel, is altogether abhominable, is most vncomely; but vnder a Turbant, and in a barbarous *Solyman*, a sworn enemie of God and his Church. *Elzear* happily coupled the sword and beads, together armes and teares, matching nobilitie with pietie, bearing himself like a Lion in warr, a Lamb in peace, and in his deuotions as a meeke doue. This was his ordinary life, and daily excercises; He euery day sayd the great Office, but with such attention, and so great Maiestie, as if he had seen

God

God with both his eyes to whom he ſpake: ſo that it was impoſſible to behold him on his knees, with his eyes bent to heauen, or fixed on his booke, and not to be touched with deuotion. Sometimes to awakē his ſpirit he ſong ſome of the moſt affectionate Verſicles: but O God what ſong of Paradiſe! He very ſeuerely faſted, not only the time of Lent, and dayes ordained by the Church, but al the Fridayes of the yeare, to participate of the Paſſion of *Ieſus Chriſt*, and the Saturdayes to the honour of the bleſſed Mother of God, al Aduent, the Eues of the Saints of his deuotion. He vnder a Garment of gold, and ſilke bare rough haire-cloth on his bodie (O braue Courtier) and as if it had been nothing, he had a diſcipline armed with Iron, with ſharpe points, and litle linkes: His cuſtome was to ſtrike himſelf al the ſpace of the *Miſerere* Pſalme, and euery verſicle

ſicle giuing himſelfe three blowes: Then wholy to cõclude his deuotions he often lay downe with his haire-ſhirt on his back, a matter which to him ſeemed delightful, repreſenting to himſelfe the horrible torments of his ſweet *Ieſus*, al the affections of his ſoule, and the crueltie of his Paſſion, where he ſwamme in his precious bloud. He almoſt euery Sunday communicated, and on the principal feaſts of the yeare, eſpecially of the bleſſed *Virgin*, whom he with much tendernes honoured; He one day by chaunce told his deare *Delphina*, that ſo ſoone as he receiued the precious body of *I. Chriſt* into his mouth, he thought he was filled with Manna and the ſweetnes of heauen. But from whence (I pray) thinke you (ſayth Delphina) comes this gracious fauour? I belieue (ſayd he) & conſtantly belieue it, that God thereby would inuite to frequent Cõmunions

munions, and weane me from the falſe pleaſures of the world; It is my vnhappines, Alas, that I make my ſelfe vnworthy by my extreme ingratitude and infidelity. Al his delight was to conuerſe with God, and to drench his ſoule in deep Contemplations, but with ſo great facility and holy familiarity, that his ſpirit was not at al diuerted by the vexation of troubleſome diſtractions. The Sonne of the Maiſter of a family coming to his Fathers chamber, ſo ſoone as he approacheth, is not made to waite at the doore, he ſtands not amuſed in the Lobby to tattle with ſeruants, or tel the quarreys and windowes of the roome, or to looke on the figures in the hangings, he preſently breakes through, and paſſeth the portal, going directly to the place, where his father ſitteth. *Elzear*, and ſuch ſoules, like Heauens fauorites, and *Beniamins* of God

God, ſtand not to entertaine a thouſand foolish imaginations and diſtractions, but with ful flight haſten to God, ſo ſoone as the heart deſireth to ſpeake to his moſt ſacred Maieſtie.

From the time he receiued this fauour from heauen; and this noble Viſion, he acquired ſo great facilitie to thinke vpon God, and to dart his ſoule aboue the heauens, that al places to him became Oratories. Sitting at the table magnificētly couered, more did he feed on heauenly Manna, then earthly ſugar; from time to time ſome ſighes were heard by ſtealth; which flew from his heart, he did (as it were) eate more vertues then viands, and many times his wine taſted of the ſhower of teares which in deſpite of him guſhed out of his eyes. He himſelſe alone knew the facilitie he had to deriue profit out of al, and to ſpiritualize obiects preſented to his eyes.

His

His heart was at that admirable place in Nature, which ſtrooken neuer ſo lightly with the end of a ſtick, whereſoeuer it touched, it made a liuely ſpring of water ariſe, as cleare as chriſtal: For the leaſt occaſion *Elzear* might haue, his heart flew al ouer heauen, and by his eyes diſtilled the ſweetnes which heauen powred into his ſoule. Whilſt he ſpake to thoſe of his family, or to others, his mind inſenſibly penetrated heauen, and neuer loſt ſight of his God. Good God how much this diuine Count wil condemne many Courtiers, who commonly ſweare it is impoſſible to be ſaued at Court, ſince he found the way to meete with God euery where, and in the midſt of moſt vrgent affaires, knew ſo wel how to caſt a glaunce towards heauen, to ſpeake good words of God from the bottome of his heart, and perpetually to haue his ſword in hand to cut the throat

throat of al euil temptations, which offer thēſelues in the Courts of Princes. When he was trained out to daūce among the Nobilitie, it is true he went, but ſo ſoone as he heard the harmonie of inſtruments, imagining it was the muſique of Angels, he was ſo much tranſported, that he thought himſelf to be halfe in Paradiſe. In ſuch ſort that *Delphina* being with him at a dauncing-entertainment had her eye perpetually vpon him, and feared nothing ſo much as to ſee him inſtantly to be entraunced, and rapt in an extaſie. Returning to his Oratory, and hauing his head ful of this harmonie, as if he had enioyed the ſweetnes of heauen, he paſſed whole nights in Contemplation, and powred forth a deluge of teares. It was to make warr againſt him to get him to daunce: It is a common cuſtome of the Court to be moſt deſirous to ſee them daunce

who

who haue no mind to it, the more to vex them: Yet ſo it was, that *Elzear's* qualitie could not wel diſpence with theſe fooliſh actiuities, and daunce he muſt, ſince he was preſent at Bals. He foreſaw this accident, and before hand had filled his shooes with grauel, and with litle pieces of Almond-shels, which very sharply pricked him: ſo that the more he daunced, the more his innocent feet were galled.

Men ſmiled to ſee him daunce ſo wel, but Angels reioyced to behold his innocent deceipt, and holy inuention: ſo many ſemi-quauers, ſo many ſtrookes on the inſtrument wounded his poore feet, and it is a wonder, he could couple together the two extremities of delight in apparance, and of ſo ſenſible and real paine. Admirably ſubtile is the Loue of God in its inuentions: What Torment (Alas) was this! Muſt one ſuffer at Court to be ſaued? The

The greateſt familiarities between him and *Delphina*, and the higheſt degree of their chaſt loues was to ſpeake of God, of Virginitie, of Paradiſe and Eternitie. In theſe ſweet conferences they ſpent the nights, and mingled their ſighes and teares. It was as good a thing to ſee them in this pleaſing diſcourſe, as in the horror of Deſerts to behold *S. Anthony* and *S. Paul*, talking of the greatnes of *God*. He made much accoût of three things, to which he euer had an eie. Firſt rather to die a million of deaths, then at anie time to commit one ſole mortal ſinne. Secondly, perpetually to enkindle the fire of the Loue of God in his heart, ſacrificing al his affections as Victimes on this diuine aultar, ſince God forbad him to leaue the Court. Thirdly, to conceale the lights of God, the fauour of Viſions, and other mercies which God had ſo aboundantly powred

powred on him, and neuer to make shew of his vertue, especially among Courtiers, who make a fowle mortal sinne of vertue, and heroical vertues of mortal sinnes, and entitle al that, Courage, and sense of noble extraction; As if Nobilitie had no other cognizance, but a dragon, other plumes then Vanitie, other armes, then beasts, and al this in a Sinople, or greene field of folie, or a sable, of black malice; This is fit enough for base Nobilitie; not for real, and replenished with vertue.

of

Of his workes of mercie, and the care he had of the poore.

CHAP. IX.

THE ordinarie gate thorough which the rich enter into Paradiſe, is Mercie. This Kingdome muſt be forced, and wonne by aſſault; The troupes of poore are the armies of the rich, and their deadpaies; The ſores of theſe lazars, are the breaches through which euil rich men creepe into heauen: The Cannon-shots are the great almes put into their hands: In the end death ſeizeth the quick & the poore man ſaueth the rich: the one ſuffering, the other offering: both purchaſe Paradiſe. The

holy *Count* in the flower of his ages did wonders in this matter, but (freindly *Reader*) I forbid thee to follow, and imitate him in many of his heroical acts, thy heart would much faile thee. He daily fed at dinner twelue poore men, and leapers; He waſhed their feete with his own hand; He kiſſed them with his lips, how ſtinking ſoeuer; He gaue them ſome good almes, then he let them go in peace, and went himſelfe to dinner, making this the beginning of his curious Table, and to prepare his appetite; an other would haue loſt it for eight daies together, but the Loue of God hath prouocatiue appetite, which Nature hath not. He had a more particular care of Leapers, then of others, becauſe this maladie gnawing the bodies, and face of the miſerable, makes them ſo vgly and contagious, that al the world forſakes them, not being able

able to endure the ſight of theſe carcaſes, without moſt troubleſome loathings. He fained to go a hunting, to chaſe the Hart, but he ran after the poore, and inſtead of a Deare he many times tooke *Ieſus Chriſt* hidden vnder theſe miſerable maladies. He knew there were ſeauen Leapers in one hoſpital, were almoſt quite deſtitute of al ſuccour: He got on horſe-back with his Fawlconers, & bearing the Hawke on his fiſt, and his ſeruants leading the ſpaniels along, & ſending them ſome one way, ſome an other, and faigning himſelfe to go in queſt of the game, with one ſole groome of his chamber who was his Barber, he rode a pace directly to the houſe of Leapers; He found ſix of the infirme ſo horribly disfigured, that no man in the world could behold them without daunger of fainting; Their mouths al eaten away, their teeth halfe periſhed, the

reſt appearing moſt hideous, their eies ſunke, or without lids, encompaſſed with mortifyed and bloudy flesh, their cheekes feſtered & mattary, my heart akes with thinking on this ſpectacle, and writing thus much; The poore Barber knew not what face to ſet vpon it. O inuincible force of holy charity? O golden heart of good *Elzear*! with a ſmiling and amorous countenance ſaluting theſe wretched halfe-putrifyed carcaſes, as if he had ſeen *Ieſus-Chriſt*, he leaped about their necks, kiſſed them al one after an other, & moſt tenderly embraced them; The poore youth the Barber, thought he ſhould with terrour haue fainted at his feete; but he was much more amazed, when he ſaw by vnſpeakeable miracle, that ſo ſoone as he had kiſſed the laſt, al of them were perfectly cured, and ſtood bolt vpright on their feet: Neuer were people beheld ſo aſtoniſhed; The Barber

ber to ſee theſe dead men raiſed, the Leapers to ſee themſelues healed by a Kiſſe of *Elzear*: *Elzear* to ſee God had made him do a miracle; Him, who thought himſelfe the greateſt ſinner on the Earth. But it was yet a much greater aſtoniſhment, when in an inſtant a ſweet odour ſpred it ſelfe throughout this ſpittle houſe, but an odour ſo fragrant and extraordinary, that al of them looking one vpon an other almoſt thought Paradiſe was fallen into it, and that *Ieſus Chriſt* had taken the ſhape of the good Count *Elzear* vpon him. The accompliſhmẽt of their ioy was that this worthy Lord flying away, & thinking to hide himſelfe, was amazed to behold his head to become radiant round about like a new Sun; The farther he ran the more the light of his head redoubled, and the raies thereof pointed directly to the ſpittle-houſe, to ſignifie the place of the miracle.

He thruſt himſelfe into the thickeſt of a foreſt, which in the end ecclipſed this notable brightnes, and this good Lord made the Barber ſweare, neuer to open his mouth to ſpeake a word of what he had ſeen. Wel, wel (ſayd he) It is not I, (Alas) It is not I who haue done this miracle, but it is our good God, who wil many times make vſe of the meaneſt inſtruments, to performe his prime Maiſter-pieces. Yet ſo it was, that the Barber from that time honoured him in his heart, as a Saint, not as a ſimple *Count?* He cauſed to enquire in euerie place where the ſick were, and eſpecially of leaprouſie, and ſecretly with one ſole groome of his chamber, went directly to them, washed their feete, plaiſtered their hideous ſores, and with incredible contentment kiſſed them, without anie diſturbance of heart, but contrary wiſe it ſeemed to him they were

were delicacies, and that he kiſſed ſacred reliques; ſo deuout was he in this holy exerciſe: Al being done he comforted them with words from heauen, and gaue large almes into their hands, and in the meane time impoſed ſilence vpon them, or otherwiſe they should ſee him no more: The groome of his chamber meane while wept, ſeing what he did, with both his eyes, and admiring the heroical vertue of his young Lord. Was it not a godly ſight to ſee a maiſter of ſo many ſeruants; to become the ſeruant of his ſeruants, and a Chirurgeon for Leapers? Was it not a goodly ſight to behold this young *Count* al glittering in gold, to lay lint with thoſe delicate hands vpon great ſores, ſwathe them very carefully, cherish the bodie, and comfort their ſoules? Al the poore preſented vnto him, were very confident they should now haue their share much

much better then, when he was in ſwathling cloutes, as you before haue ſeene. When he heard their words: *For Gods ſake (Sir) giue vs ſome almes*, he felt his heart to be penetrated, and would willingly haue diſtributed al he was worth in the world. Alas! (ſaied he) can one deny IESVS-CHRIST anie thing, who ſends vs his receiuers, to gaine ſome ſmal ſuccour from vs. No, were I to giue mine eies, my heart, and to let out the laſt drop of my bloud, I could not denie this ſmal ſeruice to him to whom I ow both my bodie and ſoule. He did much better; For he expected not, to be ſued vnto, or obſerued which waie he went, but ſent his people euerie where to find out the Indigent, the shame-faſt, Widdowes, and Orphans, and opened al the bowels of his pittie to ſuccour the whole world. It was no need to aske which waie *Elzear* would

go

go to Maſſe; The Court of gard of Beggers was early in the morning placed at the Church whether he went, & al of them confident to haue his Almes.

There happened a great famine in al theſe parts which put them into deſpaire; There was no need to aske to whom theſe miſerable famished and ſtaruen with hunger should make addreſſe; The good *Elzear* was the *Ioſeph* of this *Egipt*, and Father of the poore, who euer found his hand, his purſe, his granaries, and heart wide open. You might then behold them trouping to the Caſtle, where the holy man kept open court. He diuided his granaries into two, he ſet the prouiſion of his domeſtiques a-part, and al the ſurpluſage of corne, he cauſed to be diſtributed among the poore. Neuer hath anie man more appetite, then when he hath nothing to eate;

During

During the famine none are ſatisfied, and it is a ſtraung thing, that when one hath nothing to eate, he doth nothing but eate: Theſe vnfortunate people, had in an inſtant conſumed al which their good Lord had giuen in almes: Hunger makes men troubleſome and inſatiable, and cauſeth not only the Wolfe to forſake the forreſt, but euen the dead (if we may ſay ſo) out of their Tombe, and miſerable howſes, to ſeeke wherewith to liue. This moued the compaſſion of bleſſed *Elzear*, ſo that he a-new diuided his corne into two parts, pulling the morcel out of his own mouth to giue it to theſe Wretches, who died aliue, and cried out with hunger.

This laſted not long, he then commaunded the reſt to be diſtributed, euen to the laſt grayne. In the meane time, his houshold ſeruants cried out alowd, ſeing themſelues ſo in daunger

ger to perish with hunger. What ſenſe is there (ſaied they) to let his domeſtiques die, to fatten rogues and lazie people, who had rather ſlothfully beg, then take paines to get their liuing? Who hath euer heard, that one hath abandonned his own, to cherish ſtraungers, which come hither to ſwallow al this howſe, ſweeping away al that is good, or cõfortable? Verily is not this a goodly policie, to giue al to needy raſcals, and rake-hels ſo profuſely, and in the meane time to expoſe his own ſeruants as a prey, who die, to ſerue him wel; We are arrant fooles to attend heere on a man, who rather ſeemes a Mayſter of an Hoſpital then a Lord of qualitie. Such pleaſure he take to looke on Leapers, and ſerue as a ſteward to a heape of ſcummy people, who daily dine in this houſe, and whom he waiteth on as a Carver and a Cupbearer: ſhould his

his aunceſtors returne into the world againe, they would be ashamed to ſee ſo braue a Caſtle turned into a ſpittle-houſe, and their ſonne become a Head-groome of an Infirmerie, his granaries emptie, his Cellars, and his purſe: and we his ſeruants hunger ſtaruen, whilſt a rabble of lowzie varlets make good cheere. Hunger, and Rage make them ſpeake much other words, and farr more bloudy. Behold at this time, a miſerable old man preſenteth himſelf, who entreateth to borow a buſhel of corne; The holy *Count* could not denie him, being coniured in the name of *Chriſt*, he cals forth the good Woman who kept the granarie, and commands her to fetch the corne, and lend it to this vnhappy man; The Woman who wel knew the Granarie was quite empty, and that there was not a graine left, beſides being diſcontented a ſwel as the reſt, forgat herſelfe

ſelfe ſo much as to ſay; Let me die, verily let me die, if there be one ſingle graine, and you make the world laugh at you (Sir) to ſaie as you doe; Certaintly, it is a ſhame ſo to giue, not obſeruing what you giue. Hold (Sir) take the keyes, I wil not be made a laughing ſtock, or haue your ſeruants daily pick a thouſand quarels againſt me. The good Count ſmiling, Go, I pray, Go where I command you, if you find no corne, truſt me no more; but if you there find anie, why ſuffer you your ſelfe ſo to be tranſported with choler? Either angrie, or ashamed she went thither, confident she ſhould find nothing, & that matter would be offered for her to talke to her Lord. When ſhe was there (O good God) how much aſtonished ſhe was! for ſhe there found iuſt as much corne as was reſerued to feed the familie, which God miraculouſly had thither cõveied.

Infini-

Infinitely abaſhed ſhe came downe; no, she ran head-long downe the ſtaires, ſuch haſt she made, and proſtrating her ſelfe before *Elzear*: (Sir) ſaid she, (I craue pardon. He laughed, cõmanded her neuer to ſay any thing of what ſhe had ſeen, and that hereafter, ſhe ſhould ſpare nothing from the poore, who reſtored a hundred for one. She ſo wel kept this ſecret, that on the ſame day the whole familie knew it, and were al much aſhamed to haue ſpoken ſo fooliſh of their Maiſter, ſo that they thence forward obſerued him more as a Saint, then a Count.

The like miracle alſo hapned in the Caſtle of Ançois, with this difference only, that perpetually Corne was taken out to beſtow it on the poore, and yet it ſeemed to be ſtil multiplied. It fel out that he often viſiting the ſick, cured them. *Conſtance*, a girle of ſeauen

uen yeares old was extremely ſick, & had already loſt both ſpeach and ſight; *Elzear* being at *Arles*, and much moued with the teares of the Mother, viſited this child, layd his hand on her face, ſaying; (*Daughter*) *Gods bleſſed wil be vpon thee*: no ſooner ſpoken but done, ſhe was cured, and perfectly recouered. He receiued religious Pilgrimes into his houſe, eſpecially thoſe of the Order of *S. Francis*, whom he moſt particularly loued; he lodged *Dominicans* with him, & had a paternal care of them, he imagined with himſelfe, that cheriſhing Preachers, who feed the people with Gods bread, he ſhould participate in their merit. His heart felt an vnſpeakeable comfort in hearing the word of God, and tooke care not to looſe one ſermon. He euer obſerued ſome good thing in the ſermon tending to perfection, & thought he gaine much, when in a ſermon he had

had learned any one thing for the prâctize of vertue. A ſermon (ſayd he) is a feaſt, where nothing does you good, but that litle your ſelfe eate; al the reſt paſſeth away before your eies: ſervant and dogs deuoure the remainder. Friar *William Cornillon Cordelier* preaching the Lent at Ançois, fel ſick towards the holy week, *Elzear* much troubled at this accident, and fearing himſelfe, and his houſehold ſhould be depriued of the ſermon of the *Paſsion*; viſited the good father, found him ſhaking, and aſſayled with a cruel ague; He comforted him with heauenly words, and finding himſelf inſpired with a ſtrõg touch of the holy Ghoſt, he vndertooke the cure. Then lifting vp his eyes, hands, and whole heart towards heauen, and tenderly recommending this poore ſick man to ſweet IESVS, in the end layd his hand on his head, and ſayed:

In

In the name of IESVS-CHRIST, the only ſonne of God; Depart hence vnlucky Feauer, & leaue vs our Preacher, in ſuch ſtate that he may preach: He had no ſooner ſpoken it, but behold the good Religious man, perfectly cured; He raiſed himſelfe vp, he ſtudied on the *Paßion*, he moſt proſperouſly preached, and (verily) did wonders. When the good *Count* was asked, why he ſo tenderly loued beggers, he anſwered with great feeling: The hands of the poore are the box of angels, and their boſome the treaſure of *Ieſus Chriſt*. What is giuen to the poore, is giuen to God, & to ones ſelfe.

Al that which is beſtowed on the poore is found in heauen; that which we beſtow not on them, is loſt on earth; an other shal haue it, who wil not thanke you for it, and who wil not vouchſafe ſo much as to remember it.

That which he aſketh of vs by the hand of the begger, is the more charily to preſerue it for vs. Is it not better to lay downe our treaſures in the boſome of God, then in our coffers to be gnawne by vermine, and taken thence by the hands of robbers? Where our treaſure is, there is our heart: Can we better diſpoſe of our heart, then in God's hands: Frame to your ſelfe a Treaſure, which shal neuer perish? (ſaid IESVS CHRIST) then make it aboue the firmament. Should a man perpetually abide here, verily it were good to get the accommodation of riches, and to make good prouiſion, but being to ſtay but a moment, shal he kil himſelfe for it? The heart of man either flies to heauen with the wing of almes, or is plunged into hel vnder the burthen of Auarice. Whether is it better done, to place you gold there, where your ſoule

ſoule shal be happy through al Eternitie, or to burie it in a golden tõbe, or in the renter, where gold and hel are both togeather? Is it not a braue vſurie (thinke you) to giue earth, to haue heauen; To giue a loafe, to get al Paradiſe; and for a handful of corne to become Maiſter of al Go'ds inheritance. I wonder not at al of thoſe who ſo freely giue, but I cannot vnderſtand how it is poſſible, that belieuing it is God to whom we giue, men should be ſo cloſe handed in giuing. Alas? He, hauing powred forth for vs the laſt drop of his precious bloud, can we be ſparing towards him, and grudge at the guifts we offer him? Nay we are too happy, verily too much he honoureth vs, who vouchſafeth to receiue anie thing from vs, and to make vs become his creditours. At the daie of iudgment *God* ſpeakes not a word of the reſt,

and makes not account of anie thing, but of what the poore hath eaten: The goodnes of God hauing ſeen the draught of the eternal Arreſt, and knowing the cauſes of the ſaluation of the good, and the infinite miſerie of the wicked, to wit, their giuing or denying to the poore, what excuſe shal we alleage, if we ſaue not our ſelues? In ſo much as he is contented with a cup of cold water, putting vs not to the trouble of warming it, or to the neceſſitie of an excuſe, ſaying we haue no fewel, nor fire to heate it, but ſuch as it is in the riuer, it is auayleable enough to purchaſe al heauen, by putting it into the hands of a miſerable creature, who dyeth for thirſt. What a ſorow wil it be to the damned to ſee themſelues loſt for euer for want of hauing preſented a cup of water, whereof their dogs haue had ſufficient, and which is neuer denyed

denyed them Is it ſo great a matter to giue a cup of water out of our fountaines, and a handful of corne out of our granaries to gaine Paradiſe, ſeing the holy Martyres haue powred out al their bloud which ran vp and downe in their veynes, for the like cauſe, and other Saints ſweat forth bloud and water: & ſhal we ſpare this litle portion of tranſitorie goods, which muſt alſo quickly perish, at leaſt we muſt ſoone leaue them, to thoſe who wil neither accept, nor be thankful for them, & wil perhaps make vſe of them to purchaſe Hel. I cõplaine not at that I giue, for it is aſſured: but I lamẽt what I giue not, and account it as loſt.

How can I daily repeate my *Pater noſter*, ſaying to God; That his Kingdome may come, and that he place me in Paradiſe, if I denie him a cup of water? What an Impudencie it would be, daily to importune his goodnes & ſay,

ſay, *giue vs to day our daily bread;* if we denie him his own, and vouchſafe not to afford him a piece of mouldy bread, and that which we leaue our foote-boyes. I cannot conceale from you that I am ſo much aſhamed to do that litle I do, feeling ſo great tendernes when I put my hand into the hand of the poore, the ſubſtitutes of IESVS-CHRIST; that if I could giue my heart & bowels, it would be the greateſt comfort might happen vnto me in the world: but this much conſolateth me that God more regarding the heart, then hand, and the deſire of giuing much then the abilitie I haue to giue, I am perſwaded that he who ſo much eſteemed the two mites of the poore Voman which ſhe threw into the box, wil accept the two filly farthings, which I daily offer him, and the ſlender benediction I giue to the poore with al my heart.

He,

He, and his Vife make a vow of Virginitie before the death of his Gouerneſſe : with a notable Viſion.

CHAP. X.

THE vertuous Woman *Garſenda* heretofore Gouerneſſe of young *Elzear*, had a great deſire to ſee her litle Maiſter, and young Miſtres to make a vow of Virginitie: Sir, (ſayd ſhe to God) let me behold this, and then let me die; For I deſire nothing ſo much in the world, nor haue I any other

other contentment. God was pleaſed with her ſighes, and fulfilled her requeſt; He ſent a ſharp feauer to this vertuous woman, which in few dayes dried vp al her bloud, and ſtrooke her with death. At the ſame time, *Elzear* felt himſelfe ſo enkindled to proceed, that hauing a long while pondered in his mind to paſſe further, and to vow his Virginitie to God; he made the laſt reſolution.

He tooke his *Delphina* with him, & ſpeedily went to the place, where his good Gouerneſſe lay, he opened his whole heart to her, & acquainted her both with his own intention, and of his deare Wife, the Diamond of Ladies. The poore ſick Woman thought she should haue fallen into a ſwoone for ioy, and was long vnable to ſpeake but with her eyes, from whence aboũdance of teares flowed, interrupted with a hũdred ſighes. When theſe firſt

ſweet-

ſweetneſſes were euaporated by thoſe affectionate ſobs, & diſtilled through her eyes, a litle taking courage, and recouering ſpeach, she vttered theſe golden words, ſprung from Paradiſe: (Deare children) behold me arriued to the height of my deſires, & become the moſt happy woman of the world. You haue preuented the wishes of my poore heart, which hath not for a long time liued, but languished expecting this moment which makes me happy. You here behold your weake ſeruant, who already hath a foote in the path, which leades me to a Tomb; I dy willingly, God is my witnes, and am much the more fortunate to die, ſo comforted, ſeeing what I do, and beholding you tyed in the ſacred knot of Virginitie. It is ſayd the words of dying men are ſo many Oracles, for their good who ſtay behind; Receiue then theſe laſt words as aſſured pledges

ges of my liue more the maternal, and for euer inuiolable.

Deſpiſe this momẽtary and periſhable life, ſtand not amuſed at its promiſes, (Alas) diſaſtrous plightings; Caſt your eyes, & loues on that life, which only is life, ſince it is eternal : I haue liued, I die, and in this laſt period enioy but one contentment, to render ſome ſilly ſeruice to our Lord, and but one griefe that transfixeth my heart, which is ſo il to haue ſerued him. O God how much otherwiſe do we iudge of life, when we are not in the bed of death, but enioy perfect health! Where are now the pleaſures, the honours, the freinds, the fooliſh hopes, which ſo vnhappily charme our liues ! nothing followeth vs, but the good and euil we haue done ! But Alas, when one is in the ſun-ſet of life, the riches, and comforts which ſeemed ſo great in the eye of the world, are found to be

be very litle; and the faults which appeared ſo light, ſo venial, and pardonable, ſtraungly ſwel vp, and terrifie the ſoule. When I caſt mine eye ouer my paſſed life, thoſe fiftie yeares and aboue, ſeeme to me a momẽt, a dreame a nothing; When I reflect on what follows, the infinite laſting of Eternitie affrights me, and I now ſee my ſelfe brought to that moment, whereon the eternal happines or miſerie of my poore ſoule dependeth. If God did iudge as mortals, verily I ſhould haue cauſe to die moſt contented, ſince the cõmon opinion hath been that I had a deſire to do wel; but good God, the eyes of our Lord ſee much better, and penetrate farther into the deep cauernes of our ſoules, the ballance of his ſanctuarie weigheth. Atomes, and wind, & nothing eſcapeth, which his iuſt rigour doth not ſeriouſly examine. My deareſt, take example by me

me I haue been! young as you are, in the flower of mine age as you, ſtrong as you; Al is paſſed away like a ſhadow, ſome few dayes wil glide, and flie ouer your heads, and needs muſt you be in the bed of death, as I am; Alas! happily employ thoſe poore moments which remaine. The Angels were pleaſed to ſee you maried, and Virgins both together; perfect their Ioy; God hath been a hundred times ſollicited by my teares, and the frequēt ſighes of my heart, that he would inſpire you to conſecrate your ſelues to his glorie by the vow of Virginity; Al Paradiſe with ful hand, wil caſt on your heads, Lillyes and roſes, and al the beauties of the gardens of the Seraphins. O what a happie death ſhould I haue, if I might die in the very inſtant, that you pronounce the bleſſed words of this ſo deſired a vow! I wiſh no other propitious recommendation

of

of my ſoule, which is already on the brink of my lips, then thoſe ſweet words which cõtaine the accompliſhment of my deſires. Whilſt she ſpake thus, the young Couple were al bedewed with their teares, and had their hearts ſo ſtopped, that they could not ſpeake on word. In the end they made the vow in the preſence of this ſage Gouerneſſe, and by common conſent promiſed to God perpetual Virginitie in their moſt chaſt mariage.

The ceremonies of this vow of Virginitie, was performed by them on *S. Mary Magdalens* daie, *Elzear* cauſed a Maſſe to be ſaid in *S. Catharines* Chappel, both of them communicated with much feeling of extraordinary deuotion. At which time *Elzear* kneeled on both his knees, and ioyning hands ouer the opened Miſſal, & the holy Ghoſpels, he ſpake theſe formal words.

Lord

Lord IESVS from whoſe hands al graces flow, I confeſſe that I a wretched ſinner, and a miſerable creature cānot preſerue chaſtitie without thy ſpecial fauour: wholy then diffident of my ſelfe, and hartily confiding in thee I make a vow to thee, thy holy Mother, to al the Saints in heauen to keep my virginitie al the daies of my life, ſince it hath pleaſed thee to graūt me ſo much happines, as hitherto to preſerue it in me, and to haue inſpired me to conſecrate it vnto thee I likewiſe offer my ſelfe, rather to ſuffer a thouſand deaths, then euer to chaunge this my reſolution. Sweet IESVS bleſſe my deſires, and accept this my poore offering. Inſtantly *Delphina* did the like; and after *I word*, a gentleman, ſonne of *Garſenda*.

Altogether mingled their teares, and ſeriouſly thanked God, for ſo ſingular a mercie. In the meane time, the

the Ladie receiued al the Sacraments and Extreame Vnction, with ſuch tendernes of heart, with words ſo ſweet and cordial, that a diſſolued into teares. She asked forgiuenes of the whole world, she a hundred times adored the Croſſe, and inuoking *Ieſus*, and his holy *Mother*, died like a Saint.

Elzear appointed very ſolemne obſequies for her, & moyſtened her tombe with his teares: she was placed in the Church of *S. Francis* in the Citie of Apt, where, in their ſeueral times *Elzear* and *Delphina* were buried: Al three of them being of the third Order of glorious *S. Francis*. Now the good *Count* could not be ſatisfied to pray vnto God for her ſoule, but he had a pious curioſitie to know in what ſtate her ſoule might he, whom he ſo much had loued. God comforted his ſeruant, and ſent him this moſt bleſſed woman to giue him contentment. She appea-

red

red vnto him al radiant with gold, & with a countenance of lightning, ſo that the flashes at the firſt comming, dazeled the eies of this young Lord. Behold me (ſaieth she) Deare ſonne, behold me by God's expreſſe commandment, you ſee me too happie, and ſurcharged with a world of mercies wherewith it hath pleaſed *God* more then moſt liberally to reward the poore ſeruices I haue endeauoured to rẽder him, during my wretched life. But thus doth his Omnipotencie recompence his good ſeruants. As for the reſt I haue in charge to cõfort you in al you deſire of me. Aske me not now (I pray) whither *Elzears* hart were filled with ioy; his eyes, & ſweet languiſh-ing ſighes, wil better tel you it; The truth is he thought he should haue died, with the infinite contentment he receiues: Then taking courage againe with a pious familiaritie he asked

asked her fowre queſtions, Firſt whether her ſoule went, when it paſſed out of the bodie. Secondly in what ſtate was the ſoule of Frier *Iohn Iulian* his Confeſſour of the Order of *S. Francis*, whom he ſo tēderly had loued. Thirdly, whether the life he led with *Delphina* were acceptable, and according to Gods heart, & what he ſhould do to haue a hart according to Gods. Fourthly, what would become of the Lord *Iohn of Sabran* his Couzin, who liued amōg ſo many cruel ſufferings; & what laſtly would be his end: moſt humbly begging of her to impute this his curious inquiſition to the loue he bare to his bloud, & neareſt kindred; & to pardon him this fault, if it were a fault, ſo to affect the ſafety of his Allyes. Thus ſpake *Elzear*, to al which, ſhe anſwered what followeth. Firſt (ſayth ſhe) I muſt plainly tel you, ther haue been manie imperfections in my life, Ay

me; yea verily I wel deſerued to be moſt rigorouſly chaſtized by God; But he is ſo good, that he rather made choice to exerciſe his infinite mercie! Know then he gaue me ſo much loue, he touched my heart with ſo ſenſible ſorow at the latter end of my daies, that he was pleaſed eather to drench my ſinnes in my teares, and to burne them to condemne them to the flames of Purgatorie. I muſt then tel you, that at the paſſage out of my dead bodie, my ſoule was caried directly to Paradiſe by Angels: ſo gracious was God vnto me out of his holy Bountie. But ſince you haue a deſire to know this truth, aſſiſt me alſo to render thankes to his infinite mercie, and be you encouraged to ſerue ſo good a maiſter, who makes ſuch account of his poore ſeruants.

Moreouer I aſſure you vpon my Word, your Confeſſor is likewiſe in Paradiſe, hauing liued as a good reli-

gious man, wel obſerued his rule, and giuen good edification both within & without his Conuent, and hauing wel ſerued God, and laboured for glorie, was ſaued. Good religious men dying in their Order, feare not to miſſe their waie to heauen. And who (I pray) should go thither, if not they, who breath nothing els?

Pray then no longer for him, pray rather to him for your ſelfe; If you knew how precious, the life and death of good religious men were before God, there would be a far greater throng then there is, of ſuch as knock at their doore.

As for your ſelfe (deare Sir) out Alas! Can you doubt, whether your virginitie and *Delphina's* be acceptable to the maieſtie of God omnipotent, or no? Know if you ſo perſeuere to death, Angels do prepare goodly Coronets of lillies, and immortal roſes

ſes, and, that God reſerueth vnſpeakeable glorie for you.

You cannot do him a greater pleaſure then to loue puritie; Angels and Virgins are alike deare to him; yea certainly he ſo much the more eſteemeth this diamond of Virginitie, as it is inviolably preſerued in the mire of this wretched life, and among ſo manie aſſaults, and ſuch precipices as here on earth are encountred.

As for your Cozin of *Sabran*, I wish to God, I could giue you anie comfort, I am not commanded to tel you anie thing, but that God's iudgments are an Abiſſe, and his ſecrets formidable, but iuſt and vpright. This poore man hath ſuffered much, and hath much to ſuffer, if he chaunge not his life, he wil haue an vnhappie end. It is a miracle, when a wicked man makes a good end; but it is likewiſe a crueltie

crueltie to belieue that a good man makes an euil end. Liue wel, and feare nothing, God wil not let you be loſt. He is too good a father, Caſt your ſelfe into his armes; He wil not ſuffer you to fal to the ground, nor your hopes to be fruſtrate. As for your Couzin, giue him good counſel, pray to God for him, and reſt you in the boſome of the diuine Prouidence, which neuer wil do anie thing but to good purpoſe; As for the reſt, you muſt adore al he doth, nor muſt you plung your ſelfe too far into the gulph of his impenetrable ſecrets. They had alſo ſome other ſmal diſcourſes together, then she vanished, and returned to heauen, leauing *Elzear* in theſe ſowre-ſweet delights, which he imparted to his wel-beloued *Delphina*.

His voyage into Italy; His prudence and ſingular Bountie.

CHAP. XI.

HERMENGAVD ſonne of the Lord of *Anſois* in *Prouence*, performed ſuch feates of armes vnder King *Charles*, and bare himſelfe ſo valorouſly in al battailes, that the King knighted him with lowd applauſe of al the Caualliers of that Age. Beſides he was ſo wiſe that he was made Superintendent of Iuſtice in *Sicily*. By ſo many ſeruices he merited to be created *Count of Sabran*, where he remained ſome time ſetting good order throughout al the Countrey

trey. Some, place *Arian* in *Sicily*; ſome, in *Calabria*; ſome in the Kingdome of *Naples*; but that doth not much import the Reader. This noble Gentleman died, leauing al his ſignories to his ſonne *Elzear*, 23. yeares old, or thereabouts, he was conſtrained to go into *Italy*, to take poſſeſſion of the Countie of *Arian*, and to get the inueſtiture thereof from the King of *Naples*, and *Sicilie*. The *Sicilians* who loue not the *French* [illegible] of *Elzear's* manner of life, & would willingly to this new *Counts* coſt, haue made *Compline* to be ſung to the ſame tune, they had cauſed other *French*, to chaunt *Veſpers*, by enforcing him to finish his gouernment, before he had begun it. What shal we do (ſaied they) with theſe beades-ſaiers, and Kyrie men, we who are accuſtomed to be gouerned by braue Caualliers, & who more often take our ſwords in hand, then

our

our Breuiaries? Thinkes he of ſouldiers to render vs Hermits, and to make of our Citie a Conuent of Monkes? verily are not we wel beſet on euerie ſide, there we haue the diuels the Turkes vpon vs, and thoſe dragons of *Affrique*, and here for Leader a Monke with his beades, who wil teach vs to ſaie *Pater noſters* in ſtead of diſcharging volleys of cannon shots, and ſcattering the armes of theſe Barbarians, enemies of God, and his Church. *Elzear* being arriued, they wil meaſure you him from foote to head, and ſeing a young ſtripling, who ſcarcely puts forth the Bug-beare of his firſt beard, they wil ſcorne him. There were nothing but ſcoffes, Paſquils, and a thouſand ieeres againſt this young *Count*. Three yeares together they rebelled againſt him, and did him a thouſand iniuries, a thouſand affronts. The Prince of *Tarentum*

a frend

a frend of *Elzear*, ſeing theſe indignities, could no longer tolerate theſe mutineers. Verily, ſweet Couzin, (ſaieth he) your goodnes much hurt vs; ſee you not how this raſcallitie doth nothing but floute you. Wel, wel, let me alone, I know the humors of Sicilie; I muſt hang halfe a thouſand of this rabble, let me die, if I make them not as pliant as a gloue: It is fit among the good to be a Lamb, & with the wicked to play the Lion, ſtriking with paw, with tooth, yea al, and tame the inſolencie of theſe caytiues, who neuer become worth ought, if not curbed. Take your eaſe, if you like it: Say you, prayers for me, & I wil giue ſo manie blowes for you, that I wil come to the end of my aime.

I am content to haue al the paine & hazard of it, quickly wil I roote out al this baſe rabble. At which time *Elzear* ſmiling, Good God, (ſayth he) how you

you proceed, what? would you haue me to begin my gouernment in bloud and maſſacres, and that to make others wiſe, I play the foole my ſelfe? I hope to come to the mark by an other Bias? God who hath led me hither by the hand, wil maintaine me in it: In doing good to them, and by tolerating, or contemning their Rodomontadoes, I ſhal diſarme their Courage. It is no great matter for a Lion to teare Lambes, but for a Lamb to pul a Lion in pieces, is admirable. Now I wil make you ſee this miracle by Gods aſſiſtance, and that ſhortly. The Prince could not relliſh this diſcourſe, and in his heart accounted it meere ſuperſtition, or want of Courage; yet for honours ſake he held his peace, and tooke it for good payment: but was much amazed, when he in effect ſaw theſe Barbarians to be ciuilli-zed, and by litle and litle, returne to

their

their dutie : For they in the end were aſhamed of their brutishnes, and ſuffered themſelues to be gayned by ſuch benefits, ſo that they commonly called *Elzear* their good Maiſter, and true father honouring him as their Lord, and cherishing him as their deare father.

Amongſt the papers of his Lord and father, he found letters of a ſoldier which he had writen to him, aduiſing, he should in no ſort nominate *Elzear* for his heire. He in it alleaged a thouſand lies and outragious calumnies; That he was a ſuperſtitious foole, that it were fit to shaue him for a Monke, that he was not for armes, that the *Sicilians* ful of courage, would neuer endure him, that he would wholy diſgrace the glorie of his familie, that he would looſe at one inſtant both his life and ſtate, that he was good for nothing but to mumble ſome *Pater*

noſters

noſters between the teeth, and run ouer his beades: But as for armes, he would neuer do anie thing of worth; To conclude he ſet him forth in goodly white dreſſings, and painted him in colours liuely, and ſteeped in moſt bitter gal and vineger.

The good *Count* read theſe letters, & ſhewed them to his deare *Delphina*, who likewiſe felt her bloud preſently to boile about her heart, What? ſaied she, (*Deareſt Sir*) wil you ſuffer ſo wicked a man as this in your Court, Traitor that he is; He comes hither like a fawning dog, wel knowing in his ſoule the wrong he hath done you? It is fit that he be told, you haue diſcouered his malice, that he may repaire the iniurie done you; and become wiſe. What wil you do with theſe viperous tongues, with theſe ſcorpions, who make a faire shew, & in the meane time beare poiſon in their

their tailes? She endeauoured to enkindle him more, whē the holy *Count* ſmiling, ſtaied her, ſaying; I ſaie (ſweet freind) Alas! ſhould I anie further prouoke him, he would neuer looke on me with a good eye; fearing leaſt I should do him hurt, he wil ſeeke it againſt me, and preuent, me, he wil perpetually be diſtruſtful, of an il man, I may perhaps make a good ſeruant; IESVS-CHRIST (*Delphina*) hath not taught vs to reueng, rather to pardon, & by doing wel to enflame the hearts of our enemies, conſuming with the feruours of charity, the poiſon of the hatred which enuenometh them. I wil put theſe letters into a place, where you shal neuer heare newes of them; moſt certainly he ſuppreſſed them, and perhaps threw them into the fire, to burne the memorie and reueng thereof together. He did more; for this ſouldier comming one daie

daye into his chamber, (ſome other would haue feared he came to murther him,) *Elzear* louingly embraced him, gaue him a riche preſent, and ſo powerfully gained his affection, that the poore ſouldier ashamed of his offence, offered himſelfe afterward to be cut in a hundred pieces for the ſeruice of ſo holie a man. What could *S. Paul*, *S. Peter*, yea an *Archangel* do more, if he conuerſed amongſt Worldlings? *Delphina* without ſpeaking one word, wel obſerued this proceeding, and learnt this leſſon, prayſing God in her heart for hauing ſuch a husband. He then in a short time ſaw himſelfe in the peaceable poſſeſſion of the Countie of Arian, contrarie to the opinion of al the world. He made vſe of theſe fowre potent charmes, to do al this; To wit; To do wel to al the world euen to his enemies, to ſuffer couragiouſly, and ſwallow a

thouſand

thouſand iniuries; To giue no aduantage in his actions; to do nothing out of anger, or heate of liuer, but reposedly, and iudicially, but euer in al, & and throughout-al depending on the holie prouidence of God.

Of his Magnanimitie, great Courteſie, and vpright Iuſtice.

CHAP. XII.

THE innocency of the ſeruants of God is commonly the marke, whereat the ſcoffing wits of worldly wiſe men aime. A great part of perfection conſiſteth in being shot at with a thouſand volleys of the ſteelie tongues of enuious,

or

or giddie ſpirits, and no more to be moued then if a horſe paſſing along had ſtrooken you with his foote, or bitten you. *Elzear* was much ſubiect to be the mirth of Courtiers: more often then daily ſome trick or ſottish toy was put vpon him; He firme, as a Rock contemned theſe bublings, & windyg froth of theſe waues both of Court, & humane life. No more was he moued, at al, which was either ſpoken of him, or to him, then a brazen ſtatue. *Delphina* one daie almoſt loſt her patiēce, when breaking a long ſilence, not without ſome vehemencie; ſhe laſtly ſpake in priuate to him, and tuned it in a very sharp accent. Alas! Deareſt freind, what kind of man are you? A thouſand, and a thouſand iniuries are done you, yea a thouſand affronts, yet you no more are moued at it, then a piece of marble. As for my ſelfe I am but a Woman, but haue courage enough

enough to talke to theſe indiſcreet ones, as they deſerue. It is not fit for me to inſtruct you; Alas no; I meane not to forget my ſelfe ſo much as to attempt it; But if I may ſpeake what my heart conceiues, verily I ſay, that it appeares to me your great goodnes is inſolently abuſed: Contempt of perſon proceedeth to ſcorne of vertues; now whenſoeuer vertue is expoſed to pillage, and abandoned to violent contempt, verily euil men commit inſupportable outrages. The King of bees hath no real ſting, yet when he is angerd, he ſadly murmurs, and with a kind of humming makes al the other tremble. The doue hath no gal, but if ſhe once be enraged, ſhe laies about her, and knowes how to vſe her beake and Tallons. Is it becauſe you haue no gal, and that when you would, you cānot be angrie? Is it through ſcruple, and that you feare to be ouer-moodie;

Is it vith doubt to diſcontent anie bodie; Our Lord God hath told vs, that IESVS-CHRIST himſelf made one day a whip of Cords, and that he vſed a rabble of wicked ones who prophaned the Temple, as they deſerued; and *S. Paul* alſo, ſtrooke a wicked Magician ſo violently, that he became blind vpon it; yea *S. Peter* with a blow of his ſword ſtrook the eare of the wretched *Malchus* ſo furiouſly, that had he not turned away, he had takē off his head, and you dare not vtter one word? Are you more perfect then theſe diuine Apoſtles? were it not better, you made it appeare what you are, & what bloud flowes in your veines? The wicked wil tremble and amend, the good become better, and feare to err, yea al the world wil do its dutie. Impunitie is the mother of vice, & ouermuch mildnes, begetteth too much miſchiefe; as of the ſtrongeſt wine viniger

viniger is made, which makes them ſhed teares, who but ſmel it, ſo ſharp it is. In good truth (Sir) you should ſometimes beſtir you; for ſo your affaires would go the better. (Sir) I pray excuſe my libertie, there is no remedie for it, needs muſt I diſcharge my hart therein. What a God's name (ſaied *Elzear*, how long is it *Delphina*) that you haue ſo bent your ſelfe to preach. I can neuer take amiſſe what comes from you, nay I very wel accept what you deliuer. I wel perceiue there is fire in the chimney, and that there is ſome feruour in your diſcourſe. Your zeale ſweeteth al, and I loue you the better for it: but (Sweet heart) tel me, I prithy, what good doth it to be-angrie, and how doth it help? Wel go to, foolish men haue done a foolish thing, shal I cõmit an other to make them wiſe. Some tongue hath shot againſt me, shal I

knock my head againſt a poaſt, and breake it for deſpite, or shal I dart ſome bloudie words back againe in a brauado: nothing ſo much enrageth a chollerique man, as either to anſwere him coldly, or not replie at al. As for theſe giddie braines to punish, them ſoundly you need but to open the doore or Window, they wel throw themſelues from the top to the bottome, or dash their heads againſt the wal: Neuer doth a man ſpeake in anger, but manie wonds eſcape him which vex him enough afterward: Neuer is a man ſilent in his anger; and ſtifles his words in his mouth before he ſpeakes, but he is glad of it when his anger is ouer. Choller ſtraines men out of their nature, and renders them brutish, and enraged Tigers. Thinke you one can do nothing, vnles he ſweare his own death, and head, and denie Chriſme and Baptiſme

Baptiſme, playing the Atheiſt and *Domitian.* No (*Delphina*) no, it is not that I am inſenſible, I haue a heart of flesh as you, I feel (God wot) but too much the ſteely points of diſdaine and ſcorne, and ſince it is fit I ſpeake to you with an open heart; I muſt confeſſe, and do proteſt, that in the firſt motions the fume mounteth vp to my head, and I feel my heart to boile; but I wil tel you, what ſtaies the ſtreame of my choller, and what ſtope my tongue, and arme.

I reuolue within me the barbarous crueltie of the Iewes, and the direful things, they cauſed IESVS-CHRIST; the King both of heauen and earth to ſuffer? I haue that ſo liuely engrauen in my heart, that ſhould my eie-ſtrings be cracked, and heart pulled out, I could find neither tongue nor language to complaine. Alas! The ſonne of God, that innocent Lamb ſuffered al manner of indignities for me, and

ſhal I dare to complaine of ſome trifles done againſt me, wretched creature and worme of the earth as I am? That, which put palme into the hands of al Saints, was to haue knowne patiently to beare the follies of the wicked? How can you know you are humble, if none contemne you? How magnanimous and patient, if no man wrong you? How mortifyed, if there be not ſome indiſcreet bodie to reproach you? Is it a ſtraung thing if he mock me, ſince I am the very firſt who mock my ſelfe; and is it not true that a ſinful and wretched man as I, deſerueth al ſorts of opprobries?

And is it not more then moſt true, that whatſoeuer they do to me, I deſerue much more? If I haue deſerued it, it is but Iuſtice; Why ſhould I complaine? If not, it is now the time when I ſhould ſhew true patience. Would you then be patient vpon condition

that

that al the world were wiſe, and nothing were ſayd or done, but according to your mind. It is an Act of a noble ſpirit, neuer to do any ignoble thing, and to deſpiſe a thouſand ſilly fopperies vnworthy our anger, or true generoſitie. Now I am willing you know our Lord hath giuen me ſo much facilitie therein, that I as much or rather more, eſteeme thoſe who do me any wrong, then I did before, nor am at al ſatisfyed in my ſoule, vntil I haue rendered them good for euil, and done them ſo notable ſeruice. It is not that I tolerate any iniuſtice, or indignitie, which by the dictamen of reaſon, ought to be puniſhed for example, No; But in any matter which concerneth my own perſon, I deigne not ſo much as to ſet a ſtep forward, or to charge my memorie with it. Where are theſe brainſicks who beleiue euery valiant man, ought

to

to ſuffer nothing: Quite otherwiſe it is an argument of an abiect, baſe, and moſt feeble ſoule, not to know how to ſuffer. Cal you that a good ſtomack, which cannot diſgeſt any thing, but it muſt inſtantly vomit it vp againe? *Iob* compared a Couragious man to the Oſtritch who ſwalloweth Iron, chalke, nailes, flints, and deriues good nutriment out of al, wherewith he is fatned,

Al the vertues are louing Siſters, & neuer mutually contend with one an other. The great meeknes of *Elzear*, hindered him not from punctually being a good Iuſticier. Nay he was moſt vpright, yea rigorous, nor would admit his Iudges should faile to render Iuſtice with al ſeueritie; Extortioners continued not long vnder him; nor ſoft ſpirits, who ſuffer themſelues to be corrupted by fauour, by hearing a talking fellow who flatte-

reth

reth them, or an affected one, who caſting a pleaſing eie vpon them, they preſently yield themſelues vp, and make the ballance propend either to the ſcale of luſt or ambition. Blaſphemers were punished moſt ſeuerely, nor were fire-coales ſpared to be laied on their tongues. Slanderers, robbers, thieues, al this outcaſt vermine was banished by the horror of his iuſtice, whoſe Eies were veiled. Thoſe, who were to die by the hand of Iuſtice, died not til they were put into a ſtate of ſaluation. He was ſo good, that if anie caytiue wretch would not ſubmit to the aduiſe of his Confeſſour, he went perſonally to the priſon, and tooke the paines to admonish him, in which he was ſo ſupereminent, and had ſuch good fortune ouer theſe maligne ſpirits, that he mollifyed their pertinacious hearts, & put them into the waie of ſaluation. They who were

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in priſon for debt, had a good bargaine of it, if they were poore, he diued into his purſe, and paied for them, clearing al their debts; As for other he cõforted them with the third part, the moity, yea with the whole ſumme, but al very ſecretly, for feare the wicked might abuſe his bountie, ſtil hoping for impunitie of their crimes; when goods were confiſcated to him, he cauſed them to be caried to his coffers by the fore-gate of rigour, but by the poſterne of his mercie, he ſecretly ſent al back to the poore widow, and the Orphans of the deceaſed.

He found his ſignories much behind hand, & his County very rich in actiue debts, and poore in paſſiue. Al the world aſked him, why he did two notable things, wel worthy of memorie. Firſt, he made good al the debts due from his Lord and father, giuing aſſurance, he would diſcharge it al to the

the vttermoſt farthing. Not as the moſt part of men, who renounce the ſucceſſion, honour, and memorie of their parents, and almoſt Humanitie, to cut the throate of poore creditours, & ſend their children to the hoſpital, whilſt they, (Barbarians as they are) make merrie with other men's goods. *Elzear* was a very good huſband, and in ſhort time diſcharged al he owed, and made his houſe very free. He foũd the way how to be a vſurer in good ſort, for the ſooner to pay his debts, he gaue almes inceſſantly, ſaying God had proteſted he would reſtore a hundred for one, & that the ſpeedieſt way to pay his debts was to giue very liberally. He was not at al deceiued, for in that proportion as he gaue to the poore, God encreaſed his reuenewes, multiplied his goods, and tooke delight to fil his coffers. The ſecõd thing he did was daily to giue thankes to God

God, he had made him Lord of a Countie repleniſhed with thornes and nettles, to wit with debts, with ill-willers, with ſuits, with a thouſand conteſtations; The Coronet of his Countie was not of pearles ſtrung together as others, but of thornes enterlaced one with in an other; He no ſooner pulled off one of them, but fowre inſtantly ſprouted forth to prick his heart & head with a thouſand points. Alas! (ſaied he) It is Gods great mercie, to powre ſo much gal on our greatnes, to enterlard our pleaſures with ſuch paines and acerbities, that we are enforced, willing nilling, to be vexed at ſo wretched a world. Had I not long ſince by God's goodnes knowne the vanitie of the world, and taſted its cruel ſweetneſſes, and loathſome vnſauourines, certainly I were here in a place, where I might haue a faire opportunitie to learne, how foolish

he is who confides in this world, and how vnhappy, whoſoeuer ſets his heart vpon it. I am a Count, it is true, but of what I pray? Of *Arian*, or rather of nothing, of ſuits, and debts; I eate my corne before it growes, and drinke vp my wine before my vine bud, and am at the end of my reuenew from the firſt day of the yeare, and the intereſts which day & night gnaw me, and without intermiſſion deuoure that ſmal reuenew which my predeceſſours for my accomodation left me. When we ſwimme in delights we forget Heauen, and would neuer die, but when we are toiled on euerie ſide, then haue we life in ſuffering, and Death in deſire, and Heauen is the marke whereto our hearts leuel al our ſighes.

Of his valour in armes, and feates of Chiualrie: and of the gouernment of the Prince.

CHAP. XIII.

THERE is nothing couragious, nothing dextrous, nothing heroick, but vertue. Other may haue ſome impetuous furie like buls, ſome rage as Lions, ſome craft like foxes; but true Courage, and noble generoſitie of ſpirit depend without anie other help, vpon vertue. Fooles belieue one cannot be fit for armes, if he be not wicked, a blaſphemer, villaine,

a ſauage *Arabian*: Theſe Deuotes (ſay they) are Hipocrites, wretched ſluggards, and very Aſh-heapes fit to couer Cinders, and ſay *Pater noſters*. Now ſhal you ſee this *Elzear*, who was eſteemed a meere Monke, as braue a gentleman, as any of his time, yea euen in *Naples*, where it is ſayd Gallants grow, and where onely the refined flower of Chiualrie is.

The King of *Naples* commaunded a feſtiual meeting for his pleaſure, & propoſed a prize to anie who ſhould take the ring, running with the beſt grace. You might haue ſeen a world of thoſe ſtrouting gallants, ſuch as are onely braue to beate the pauement of a Cittie, and to corſet a horſe readily. The King entreated *Elzear* to make one, and to crack a couple of launces: Needs muſt he do it, al the world expected to ſee ſome milke-ſop on horſe-back.

He

He came forth on the day appointed mounted vpon a goodly Coorſer, with launce in hand, his helmet al wauing with plumes, couched in his ſaddle with ſo good a grace, that al men were much amazed.. At the ſound of the trumpet, a thouſand of theſe braue Louſiers ran, and that was al, for they ſcarcely touched the Ring; *Elzear* eagerly pricking his ſteed forward, who foamed aboundantly, and flew with incredible ſwiftnes; caried the ring ſo ſuccesfully, and ſo often brake his launces with ſo good a grace, and performed ſo many feates of armes, in this combat of Courteſie, that al the gentlemen with a common conſent iudged him victorious, and only worthy of the iewel, and title of a Cauallier. Neuer were theſe Gallants ſo aſtonished and ashamed, as when they ſaw this French man, whom they thought to be a very ſot; take out of

of their hãds ſo noble a victorie. King *Robert* would needs giue him the order of Knight-hood in great ſtate; He muſt watch al night in the Church to diſpoſe himſelf thereunto, according to the old cuſtome of good and auncient Knights.

He did it, but with ſuch ſuperabondance of deuotion, that he was wholy tranſported into God. In the day time he ran with men, al the night he flew with angels, but ſo wel, that in the morning the Court comming with a thouſand tara-tantaraes of Trũpets, thunder of Drumbes, al the nobilitie in triumph, an incredible murmur; the good man heard none of it, ſo rapt was he in an Extaſie, in ſuch ſort that he was faine to be haled and pulled to make him come to himſelf, and to finish the ceremonie. O what a gallant, what a ſoldier of Paradiſe! Howſoeuer, the King Knighted him, but

with teares of ioy in his eyes, seing so great a miracle with them both, to wit, a young Lord, the flower of Knights, so good a soldier, a Courtier, a maried man, a virgin, and a Saint. These pieces seldome meet in one, especially at Court.

This was the cause, that king *Robert* chose him among al the Lords of his Court to make him gouernour of his sonne *Charles*, Prince & Duke of *Calabria*. This Prince was sprightful, confident, & but too wel vnderstood his extraction: He already had sucked in the contagious aire of the Court, and tooke delight to breake ieasts, yea to vtter grosse language, and impure words whereat others might laugh, and this was termed brauerie, and polite court-wit. Count *Elzear* seing this much libertie was an il presage in the young Prince, dissembled at first, sought to gaine credit, and his affe-

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ction; he opportunely tooke his time; and ſuffered not his zeale to breake forth, ſufficiently vnderſtanding, that indiſcretion couered with zeale commits a thouſand euils, in ſeeking to do good. When he ſaw the time very fit, and the Princes ſpirit in a good tune, hauing heard him ſpeake ſome ſlight exorbitancie, he tooke him apart, and ſayd (Sir) the greatnes of Princes is not greatnes, vnles it be raiſed on the wings of vertue. To ſweare, to play the wag, ſpeake idle words, is tolerated for lackeyes and horſe-boyes, but Princes it infinitely abaſeth; wiſe men who heare you, deſpiſe you in their hearts, fooles who through ſottiſh aſſentation applaud you, in priuate mock at you; They wil ſay, that to be a Page, you would make a prettie youth, but to be a Prince, you take not the way. God hath created you a Prince to commaund ouer

others, and to giue him an account of their deportmẽts! Alas! And how can you ſway others, who cãnot rule your ſelf? Why thẽ do you paralel your ſelf with Court-wags? Thinke you, if you entertaine not the feare of God, that mẽ wil feare you? If you ſerue not God, can you hope your ſubiects may obey you? In that meaſure as Kings haue a care to honour God, Godlikewiſe cauſeth their ſubiects to honour thẽ? I am terrifyed, when I in mind reuolue the diſaſtrous end of the moſt part of the Potentates of the world. Their Hiſtories are nothing but bloud, murders, and horrible tragedies. You may behold dozens of them choaked, ſtraungled, piſtolld, poiſoned, betrayed, cut in quarters, eaten vp aliue, ſodainly, and ſhamefully dead. It would grieue one to ſee this ſlaughter. Why thinke you (Sir) haue they ſo diſaſtrous an end, it is becauſe their liues were very

ful

ful of ordure, of a thouſand, and a thouſand ſinnes. What, they made innocents ſuffer, God cauſeth them to abide in their turne. It is ſayd, the worke of God, is, to proſtrate the great who wil not humble themſelues. Vpon theſe ſo high erected heads, the arrowes of heauen fal, and the lightnings are ſhot vpon theſe magnificencies, proud and puffed vp with vanity. What a cruel heart-breaking would it be to me, if I ſaw you (wo is me) to liue in ſuch ſort: how ſhould I be affrighted, fearing leaſt God should dart againſt you the thunder of his iuſt anger? young Princes thinke, they ſhal euer be young, ſtil in bloome perpetually adored like litle Gods, whereupon they reſigne themſelues ouer to al manner of licenciouſnes, death ſurprizeth them on a ſudaine, and with a by-blow cutteth off al this greatnes, and makes a handful of ſtinking aſhes

of

of it. I ſpeake not this with a purpoſe to make you a Monke, nor to render you ſuperſtitious, inſtead of a braue and generous Prince; I know a Prince ſhould liue like himſelfe, and afford himſelfe ſome recreation, for honeſt paſtime. But how! can not one laugh, without biting his companion? Can not one talke vnles he blaſpheme God and his Mother? Can not one paſſe away the time, except he do as bruite beaſts? Thinke you theſe Neopolitan Lords, like, the ſlight behauiours you haue learnt, which ſauour of baſenes, and taſt of an ale-houſe. Such an one there is among your flatterers to applaud you, who in his heart wil embrace ſome treaſon againſt you, not belieuing that ſo light an hand can worthily wield the ſcepter of *Naples* & *Sicily*, which is ſo weightie. The mouth that muſt pronounce Oracles and decrees both

of

of life and death, ought not to be profaned by words vnworthy of a Prince. If you wil approach to God, to Vertue, pietie, valour, and the greatnes of a Prince, I wil ſerue you, and ſeriouſly endeauour to make you one of the braueſt Princes of the world: But if that like you not (Sir) neuer shal *Elzear* be ſo baſe as to cooperate to your dishonour.

Thus ſayd the good Count; The young Prince felt his heart to be penetrated, ſo that leaping about his neck. Wel, wel, (*Sir*, ſayd he) It is yet not too late to begin; But (gentle *Sir*) what then muſt I do, and what are the perfections of a Prince of mine age, ſuteable to his condition? Theſe words opened the heart of *Elzear*, and made him readily vnfold himſelfe, he then made an humble obeyſance, and wel neare ſpake theſe golden words, worthy to be engrauen in the hearts of

of al good Princes.

(Sir) the fowre elements, whereof great Princes are compoſed, are Pietie, Magnanimitie, Iuſtice, Clemẽcie: The firſt to ſerue God; the ſecond to deſtroy the wicked: the third, to do no wrong to anie; the fowrth, to make himſelfe beloued by his ſubiects, and wholy to gaine the hearts of al the world.

The holy Scripture repreſenteth thoſe fowre Vertues vnto vs in the viſion of *Ezechiel*, where he deſcribeth the treaſure of God; To wit, the ſoule of a good Prince, God's Lieutenant general on earth. He ſaw a Bul, a Lion, an Eagle, a man, or an Angel tyed together, and al inuolued in a Chriſtal: That is to ſay, that the pietie of his innocent hand ſacrificeth the ſoule of a Prince to the glorie of God; Magnanimitie maketh him a Lion dreadful to al God's enemies, and his; for he

hath

hath no other; Iuſtice frames him to be a royal Eagle, which clearely ſeeth good and euil, and ſparing harmeles birds, fals roughly vpon robbers, and teareth them in pieces; laſtly clement humanitie ſheweth him, as a man ful of Courteſie, or rather as an Angel-guardian of mankind, but al muſt be encloſed in a tranſparent Chriſtal of a life innocent, and worthy of a Prince, who is the flower of Princes.

A Prince who feareth God, is omnipotent, and ſhould al the earth faile him, neuer wil heauen. They who diſpatch their affaires and take councel without God, are ordinarily vnhappy, and early or late their whole fortune is ruined.

I know it is very hard, yea almoſt impoſſible, but that a Prince fal into many inconueniencies, and commit many faults, abſolute power, vanitie; Flatterers, ſtrong occaſions, bloud

which

which boileth in their hearts, and choller which transporteth them, the Contagion of the wicked, wherewith Courts are filled; Al this oftimes carieth them beyond dutie and raison; I expect not that you be free from fault, but that you do not long stick vpon it, by heaping one vpon an other. Euerie good festiual go to confession, and the holy Communion, the one of these Sacraments wil place you in the fauour of God, and blot out al which is past; the other wil giue strength to defend you for the future.

Haue a care of God, and God wil take care of you. If you feare him, he wil loue you; If you despise him, he wil overthrow, and vtterly ruine you.

Loue the poore, and God wil multiply his fauours ouer your howse. When you are angrie, speake not a word at that instant, otherwise you vndoo

vndoo your ſelfe ; There are more Princes ruined by their tongues and choller, then by the edge of hoſtile ſwords, a word ſpoken at random makes a hundred heads flie off, and cauſeth a thouſand volleys of cannon shots. It is much better to ſtifle anger in a couragious ſilence, then in the bubbling of bloud, and the torrents of a cruel ſlaughter.

Neuer do anie thing either through eare to braue an other, or through ſn inordinate loue towards anie; but becauſe Vertue, and reaſon require it.

Neuer fauour vitious perſons, nor fit your Court with the wicked. The vertue of others ought to be the meaſure of your fauours, and their goodnes the only ſcope, and obiect of your benefits.

Let the moſt vertuous be ſtil the beſt welcome to you, if you deſire to haue a flourishing Court.

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It is saied few Princes are saued, be you of that litle number, & free your selfe from the cruel tirannie of libertine Tongues, scorning these scummy people, who know nothing but the art to mock at vertue, and Christian actions, and how to make vice, triumph.

Be ashamed of nothing but euil, neuer of good; Happie is that Prince who makes trophey of vertue.

Loue such as loue your good, and who giue you wholesome and sage aduise. A Prince who takes Counsel, neuer suffers shipwrack, or if he do, his reputation neuer doth, and his honour alwayes preserues it selfe in despite of tempests.

You must hate flatterers, as the plague; If you ruine not them, they wil you; But this is an oracle; Al Princes who belieue it, find themselues in good plight, they who despise it, are drenched

drenched in hideous gulphs: The only meanes to eſcape out of the hands of theſe cruelly ſweet Syrens, is to auoid them.

Your principal greatnes is to honour good men, eſpecially the ſeruants of God, and the Prelats of the Church: ſo much as you cherish them, ſo much wil God powre his infinite mercies on you. Giue to God, if you deſire he giue to you; other wiſe it were a shame ſtil to beg of him, and neuer to render him ought.

To lie, ſweare, forſweare, breake promiſe, are the vices of ſtirrop-holders, and baſe people, but in Princes they are kind of ſacriledge; nothing ſo much abuſeth their greatnes before God and men, as to abandon themſelues to theſe weakneſſes, vnworthy their qualitie.

Remember you are vnder the hand of God, as men vnder yours; as you vſe

vse men, so God wil vse you, & know the greatest Prince of the earth, is but as a silly Butterflie before God.

Take heed you follow not counsels heddie, and ful of fire; It is termed Courage, Zeale, Constancie, but to say truly, it is nothing but precipitation, and indiscreet feruour.

To be a great Prince you must be mature and serious in Counsel, prōpt in execution, and inuincible in the current of an affaire, without relaxation through intervening difficulties.

Wicked Princes enter like Foxes, Raigne as lions, and die like Dogs, but good begin like men, liue as Angels, and die as Saints. *Dauid* in the armie. *Salomon* in the Church, *Moses* in state-gouernment; a soldier of IESVS CHRIST, an Emperour among the good, a Terror to the wicked, a demy-God on Earth, is the true life of a Prince, who desires to be the paragon

of

of Princes. In a word, would you be a good Prince, and a Maiſter, ouer men; be a good ſeruant of God.

Theſe graue & holy words ſo liuely touched the heart, of this yoũg Prince, that in an inſtant he was ſeen to be wholy chaunged; He was nothing but modeſtie, but ſweet grauitie; but Courage and wonders.

Al the world preſently ſuppoſed the Count of *Arian* had ſeriouſly conferred with Duke *Charles*; who was become the wiſeſt in the Court. Meane while King *Robert* went into *Prouence*, leauing his ſonne at *Naples* vnder the charge of *Elzear*, who was chiefe of the Counſel, and diſpatched almoſt al the affaires of ſtate. To corrupt him al ſuitors made offer vnto him of a thouſand preſents, goodly Ginets, Tapiſtrie hangings, ſiluer veſſel, precious ſtones, iewels; pure ſiluer, verily he ſent them back againe with al their rich

rich preſents, and would neuer accept a Carolus of anie man; He held the ballance euer, and a man muſt take good heed how he ſtumbled before him. He vſed to talke to God with a pious familiaritie, when he was ſingle alone with him in his cloſet. Some harkned to vnderſtand his affectionate colloquies, and one day theſe words were heard; Lord God, thou oweſt me much gold, ſcarlet, & precious ſtones, and I reſt aſſured thou one day wilt render a hundred for one. In the end his ſiſter in law, hauing ouer-heard him ſaied, (Good Brother) what meane you to ſaie to our Lord, he oweth you ſo much. Ah deare ſiſter (ſaied he) hath not he ſaied, that deſpiſing ſomething of worldly riches for him, he would render a hundred for one? If we be Catholique; ought not we to belieue him? If we belieue him not, are we

Catholiques

Catholiques? It was told him there were certaine preſents might be receiued with a good Conſcience. It is true (ſaied he (but we often begin with that which may be, and end with that which neither should, nor ought to be: Firſt we take the peares, then the ſiluer Baſket wherein they are brought, laſtly the Tree and Orchard which bare them. When once one is allured to take, it is a world of paine for him to weane himſelfe from it, & quite to leaue it. It is ſo charming a thing to behold growne in a morning on our carpets, flowers, fruits, piſtolets, pearles, that it is a miracle to be able to obſerue a iuſt mediocritie therein.

One while the wife flattereth and ſaies, it is to her thoſe things were giuen: one while the children ſaie they are denied that which was meant them, ſome time the ſeruants com-

plaine their throtes are cut, by depriuing them of their right, and that neuer ſhal they make a fortune; when once the ſluce is open, the torrent comes in which ſweeps al and in the end carieth al along and becomes Maiſter of the Maiſter himſelfe. The miſchiefe is, that appetite growes in eating, and we haue ſeen men who in the beginning were inexorable, and meerly inflexible rocks, who by litle and litle, haue been ſo much inueagled, and tranſported with the Current, that neuer might you ſee anie more corrupt. The very Gentiles faigned, the Gods, although Gods were won by preſents, and ſuffered duſt to be caſt into their eies at the time when ſome fat ſacrifice or rich offering was put into their hands. The only meanes neuer to do il, is neuer to begin: For he who takes, is taken, & who ſtretcheth out his hand to the giuer

giuer, yeildeth vp his conſcience to indiſcretion. The Torpedo ſuffereth himſelfe to be taken, and taketh him who tooke him, benumes him, and vndoes him; The guift ſtupifieth the hand which takes it, and goes directly to the heart, to kil iuſtice in it, mouts vp to the braine to eclipſe reaſon, fauour for iuſtice, euil for good, in ſuch ſort that inſenſibly one is from an vpright Iudge metamorphized into a bold thiefe, yet muſt you afterward giue thanks to him who hath robbed you, and perhaps cut your throte. *Elzear* vnder ſtood nothing of this, & rather deſired to die in an hoſpital, and gaine heauen; then die in gold and ſcarlet, and ſinke into hel, whither euil Iudges go. Behold my reſolution, and to me ſpeake not otherwiſe.

Of his Charitie, Faith, and Deuotion.

CHAP. XIV.

AS guifts no longer bare ſway in Court & Counſel; ſo the affaires of the poore began to be much forgotten, and condemned to eternal delayes. One would haue thought when he ſaw poore ſuitours, he beheld Fantoſmes, and ſpecters; This ſcared my Maiſters; They were termed ſawcie, troubleſome, & contentious people, they were not good enough to be caſt out to footboyes and dogs. Out Alas! That where Gaine is dead, Charitie ſhould be ſick, and poore Iuſtice much out of order:

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This pierced the good Count's heart, and made him reſolue to do a moſt memorable Act; He ſought out the Duke, he complained to him, and ſhewed him the nobleſt title of a Prince was to be the Protectour of the poore, ſince God was their father; That he would be pleaſed at his humble ſuit, to furniſh him with a new Office, to wit, to make him Aduocate of the poore, and to be their Agent in Court. The Duke embraced him & kiſſed him. O the Goodnes of God (ſayd he) hartily laughing, what an office beg you (Count *Elzear*) and what kind of fauour! you wil haue no competitours in this Ambition, and I am confident that men wil more pittie, then enuie you. Go to, I admit al you deſire of me and recommend the poore of this Kingdome vnto you. *Elzear* made a low reuerence, and thanked him moſt hartily. For this pur-

purpoſe he cauſed a great bag of purple veluet to be made according to the faſhion then in vſe, and paſſing through the towne receiued the ſuits of the poore, which he put into it, and neuer ceaſed, vntil he had giuen anſwere to al their requeſts.

This newes being ſpred through al the Citty of *Naples*, and the whole Kingdome; Imagine with your ſelfe what armies of the poore came to beſiege him. Whereſoeuer he went, he met with worlds of them; He was better waited on then the King, ſo great was the throng, that ſcarce could the preſſe be broken through to afford him paſſage. Al cried out alowd for ioy, ſeing this noble perſonage with this great bag, a cheereful countenance, & a ſoule ful of cõmiſeration, receiuing grieuances, taking petitions, ſowing Almes, comforting al the world; He ſeemed the *Ioſeph* of this *Egipt*, & the

Lieu-

Lieutenāt of the Sauiour of the world. He tooke paine, to perfect the il pennd petitions, which theſe poore people had preſented to him, he opened them to the Counſel, he pleaded for them, he was Procter, Aduocate, Maiſter of the Requeſts, Councellor of State, indeed al kind of offices in fauour of theſe miſerable creatures. But that which is admirable, he did al this with a mery countenance, he pleaded with ſo much Rhetorique from heauen, he found ſuch figures of Paradiſe, and ſuch flowers of ſweet elocution borowed from charitie, and from an Eloquence ſo Seraphical, & thundering, that he in a manner preuailed in al his cauſes. Doubt you not but that amōgſt al theſe matters ſome indiſcretions happened, extreme want takes away iudgement, and the poore wretches thought to haue licence to thruſt in euery where, at al times, and among

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al perſons : They haue nothing in their heads, but this: they thinke there is not any thing vnder heauen els to be done. One day among the reſt it fel out, a poore youth, but verily moſt indiſcreet, being ſtolne into his chamber, and ſeing him waſhing his hands, to ſet down at the Table. Ah (Sir) cries he out, you go to feaſt, whilſt my poore ſuit is forgotten; your Excellencie promiſed, I ſhould this day haue a diſpatch, ſee what it comes to. Certainly (deare freind) ſayd the holy man, you ſay true, nor ſhal the day ſlip hence, til I haue performed my promiſe. Dinner, Table-Companie, al was left, he ran haſtily to the Dukes pallace, did the buſines of the poore man, brought back his petition ſigned, put it into the hands of the youth; waſhed his hands againe, ſat downe at the Table, and neuer did eate with a better ſtomack, then after this new refection,

fection, which God had ſent him by the hand of this poore man. Who can be able to recount the infinite numbers of ſuch Acts of heroical charitie, performed by this man of God.

Nay he paſſed much farther, for he was not content to Diſpatch the affaires of widowes and orphans, but ſeing them in neceſſitie, he gaue them wherewith to liue, whilſt their ſuit depended; after he had taken much paines for them, he condemned hemſelfe to the disburſment, aud gaue large almes out of his own purſe, and interceded for them as if they had been his proper entrailes, and own children. Certaine Widowes came from *Sicilie* to *Naples* with their litle orphans; their abode in that place to ſollicite their affaires, and their ordinarie expence had wholy conſumed their meanes, they proſtrated themſelues before the *Count*, who tooke pittie

pittie of them, and cauſed them to be furnished with al things neceſſarie, with vnſpeakeable Charitie. Courtiers let flie a thouſand Court-ſcoffs at the good *Count*, which flew like ſo manie arrows, and in ſcorne called him, the Aduocate of beggers, the Agent of Vagabonds, the King of Hoſpitals, the Emperours of needie Rogues, and failed not to breake a thouſand ieaſts vpon al his innocent actions, and particularly mocked at him that his boſome was perpetually ſtuffed with petitions of the poore. The moſt daring of them ſaied euen to himſelfe: (Sir) what yearely penſions haue you from your great Cliēts? That he muſt needs be rich with the preſents his faction gaue him; That he was the beſt attended, and moſt honourd Lord of the Court. It is true his liueries were ſomewhat ragged, and his followers nothing wel bred.

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The holy man did onely ſmile at it, & ceaſed not to proceed in his courſe: He often reſolued within himſelfe: this ſpeach of our Sauiour IESVS-CHRIST; *What you do to the leaſt of theſe poore wretches, I wil allow of it, as done to my ſelfe.* So that he ſerued the poore, with as good a wil as if he had ſeen IESVS-CHRIST, before his eies, and felt an incomparable contentment in this noble employment, which he eſteemed more precious, then the Conqueſt of an abſolute Monarchie.

His faith was ſo liuely, ſo ſolid and conſtant, that nothing could be more. Abuſes of the Church, ſcandalized him not, nor caſt on his tõgue a thouſand vnbridled liberties, or words bold and ſcandalous. He infinitely reuerenced the Pope, the Cardinals, the Paſtours, the Religious, & would not ſuffer that any man in his preſence

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ſhould ſpeake il of them. They are thoſe (ſayd he) through whoſe hands God diſtilleth on vs his bloud and fauours, ſince he pleaſeth to make vſe of them: we may deriue the benefit which God wil beſtow on vs by them; Find we not the water of a fountaine, which runneth through the throte of a Dragon, of a Lion, of a brazē Satyre, as taſtful, as that which ſtreameth through the mouth of an Angel of white marble. What euil doth the euil ſeruant, when the Lord is good? When Embaſſadours are ſent hither to the Court from Princes, we take no heed of their perſons, to wit, whither they be Turks, Barbarians, Atheiſts, Wicked; it is ſufficient they bring vs good newes, rich preſents, and that the King our maiſter be wel ſerued. And as concerning that which *Delphina* ſayd, that we ſometimes ſee certaine things, which would our

ſoules

ſoules, and murther Faith: He ſayd (*Deareſt*) I feel my ſelfe by the mercie of God, ſo ſtedfaſt in my faith, yea God hath giuen me ſo forcible and liuely lights, that should the Pope, the Cardinals, & al Eccleſiaſtiques turne *Ottomans* al men become Apoſtateas, yea Mounſieur *Francis Mairon* at this preſent the Oracle of Theologie, or ſhould my good Confeſſour *Iohn Iulian*, and my gouerneſſe *Garſenda* returne from the other world, nay the whole world preach the contrarie: I would not forgo the leaſt point of it.

Yea let me go ſome what farther, were wicked Antichriſt in the world making al ſwim in bloud, and were al the diuels vnfettered, and were I to ſuffer a thouſand deaths, and a thouſant Martirdomes, I find my heart ſo ſetled, ſo vnshaken, that nothing in the world, might be able anie thing at al to terrifie my beleife, or make

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me wauer in my faith. Let Eccleſiaſtiques ſuffer themſelues to be damned if they wil; Let the Pope turne Turk, ſo I be ſaued, and inuiolably preſerue the faith I promiſed to God, how can al this hurt me? It is not of me of whom God wil take account of it; let euerie one be ſaued, who may? I shal not be damned for them, nor they ſaued for me; Euerie one is there for himſelfe, nor can we herein haue a ſubſtitute, euerie one in his own perſon muſt appeare, and be diſcouered to the light. From this liuely faith aroſe al the vertues of this great man, as it is ſaied from the rainbow commeth the rock-Chriſtal, with which, you may make what precious ſtone you liſt. This may be vnderſtood by a letter he ſent to his deare Wife: For she one daie perceiuing he ſeiourned very long at *Montpeliers* in *Languedock* of purpoſe ſent a gentleman to know

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the true ſtate of his health, and wrot two or three words, witneſſing her tender reſentment of his ſo long abſence. To which he thus anſwered, (*Delphina* my deare Spouſe) be not troubled at me, for thanks be to God, I am in very good health. If you deſire conſtantly to find me, and neuer faile, ſeeke me in the open wound of *Chriſt's* ſide; for there my heart ordinarily reſideth, neare the heart of my Maiſter; You shal find me no where els, and trouble not your ſelfe to ſend to ſeeke me in anie other place.

Neuer did the world ſee ſuch a Courtier who had his bodie perpetually in the perplexities of Court, & his heart euer in the heart and wound of IESVS CHRIST crucified. His Confeſſours likewiſe were amazed to behold the purity of his heart, and that he contracted neither the duſt nor ordure of the Court. The liuely rayes of the ſun

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penetrateth through mire & thornes, and commeth forth more pure then it entred in; This is the true Symbole of *Elzears* conſcience.

On a time being vpon the Mediterranean ſea, returning to *Marſeilles*, with his wife and familie, a cruel ſtorme raiſed the ſea waues, which made the Marriners looſe courage, but much more the women, and others: The fore-ſaile was caried away by a blaſt of wind, the maſt battered, and by the tempeſt al ſhiuered, the poore veſſel crackt in euery quarter, & opening on each ſide began to leake; The image of death was ſeen to glide along before their eyes, and the moſt confident thought they ſhould dye, among the vehement outcries of ſilly Women, the clamours of Marriners, and a thouſand Vowes, which deſpaire drew out of their hearts. *Elzear* neither changed colour nor ſpeach, he

he ſo hartily diſpoſed himſelf to praier: that he made the tempeſt to diſſolue, and God hearing his good ſeruant; thruſt the poore ſtorme-beaten ſhip directly into the hauen. When al were in ſafetie, he ſharpely reprehended thoſe who ſo litle confided in God, they being ſo ſhamefully abandoned to the terrour of death. *Delphina* ſpake for al: Alas! (Sir) ſayd ſhe; They who were more couragious then we, were affrighted as we, and in good truth, I know not any man in the world, who trembleth not in ſuch a ſtorme, and to behold an Abiſſe opened before his eyes. (Lord God) and how Sir were not you afraid to periſh, ſeing the violent rage of the tempeſt?

To which *Elzear* ſmiling replied, afraid? and of what? Of the ſea, of death, and furious billowes? Is not God, as wel God on the ſea, as land? Doth not he equally commaund ouer

the ſtormes & Calmes of the Ocean? What care I whither I die on the land or ſea, ſince I muſt needs die: I had as lief fishes deuoure me, as wormes gnaw me; If our time be come, would we auoid it? Can we decline it by our exclamations and foolish teares; Thinke you by ſounding an alarme to ſcar death? If the diuine Prouidence wil take vs on the ſea, it is good to die, ſo it be between the armes of God: Now that you may know why I feared not death; I wil tel you, it is a fauour from God, but yet very particular; ſo ſoone as I ſee anie danger, I eiaculate my heart to God, and ſay to him (Lord) If needs ſome muſt perish, I humbly beg it may be thy poore ſeruant, I deſerue it more then anie other, and am willing alone to ſuffer the iuſtice of thy wrath; ſpare others, the meaneſt of them wil much better ſerue thee, then wretched *El-*

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zear. Elzear alas ! So vngrateful to thee, and ſo miſerable, that he can do no ſeruice worthy of thee. Behold me (O God) readie for life, for death, for anie thing may pleaſe thee. Alas! Nay, infinitely happie if thou vouchſafeſt to take the paines to chaſtice a miſerable ſinner. So ſoone as I haue pronounced theſe words, I feel my courage ſo fortified, that nothing is able to terrifie my ſoule.

of

Of his humility, indifferent in al things and his Victories.

CHAP. XV.

A SOVLE truly humble, is a real Phenix, nay ſomething more rare, when it is in great honours, & eſpecially at court, where humility is eſteemed meere doltiſhnes, or want of ſpirit: If one affect not greatnes, if one ſtand not nicely vpon his reputation, euen to the point of a needle for feare of contempt, he hath no courage; This point of honour looſeth al honour, yea many times the ſoule it ſelfe.

Elzear was moſt humble, but no whit

whit either baſe or cowardous, he knew wherein the true point of honour conſiſted, and failed in no part of it, he vnderſtood where the-point of humilitie was, and was very ambitious of it; neuer offended he any man: He was the flower, the grace, and whole honour of the Court; neuer was he heard to ſlaunder any man; if the renowne of men abſent were traduced, he ſtrōgly defended them, & made him whoſoeuer he were to looſe his aime. He extenuated not the praiſe giuen to others but willingly added thereunto, but with a ſingular grace, and free from affectation; He in his own heart accounted himſelfe the greateſt ſinner in the world, not that he made shew of it in his diſcourſe, wel knowing that manie with lips humble themſelues very lowly, but the heart belies the tongue, and much troubled would they be, were they beleiued.

They

They are Bals throwne to the ground to rebound the higher. That which astonished his Confessours was, that they protested in his general Confessions, they could neuer perceiue one sole mortal sinne, and in his ordinarie confessions he so much aggrauated his least venial sinnes, & powred forth so many teares, that it was a wonder to behold, whence he could deriue so profoūd an humilitie, hauing his soule so pure, and endowed with so excellent perfections. Fooles imagine an humble man can haue no courage! Simple that they are! Nay it is much otherwise, for to say truly, there is not anie one couragious, but he who is really humble. No more did *Elzear* feare death, or blowes, thē shadowes; whereas manie times these mad *Orlandos*, who are Lions in peace, proue very reedes in warr. There happened differences between the Emperour

Henry

Henry the ſeauenth, who rauaged al *Italie*, and King *Robert*; Pope *Clement* the fift ſought to accord them, but neuer would *Henry* harken to it. See then *Italie* couered al ouer with ſwords and ſoldiers, king *Robert*, ſent *Iohn* his brother, and Count *Elzear*, to commaund ouer his armie; two pitcht battels were fought, al by the direction, & ſage counſel of *Elzear*, who was ſo bleſt by God, that he alwaies got the victorie, and won the field: In the heate of fight he ſeemed a Thunderbolt of warr, for he performed ſuch feates of armes, he cut off ſo manie heads and armes, he ſo brauely animated his ſoldiers, that al men amazed; ſaied, Lord God, is this the man, we tooke for a sheep, behold him like an enraged Lion; nay is not this he, who we thought could not draw forth his ſword; but behold, a Real *Alexander*, a ſtroke of Thunder, which turneth topſy-

topsy-turvey al it encountreth? Now the battel was very bloudie, and the torrents of bloud, ran Crosse the fields, [illegible] the Carcases along by heapes. Al men applauded the holy *Coũt*, there was nothing but lowd cries of Comfort, which cleft the aire with a thousand & a thousand voices, Long liue *Elzear*, long liue the holy Captaine; king *Robert* knew not how to congratulate him, nor with what to crowne him; He thought to giue him rich presents, but the holy man tooke them with one hand, not to offend the King, and with the other distributed them al among the poore.

He had two great scruples after he retired into his closet, one vpon his iust feare least so manie praises might haue caused vanitie in him, and not seriously enough to haue ascribed the glory of the battel to the great God of Hoasts, sole Authour of Victories.

The

The other, leaſt in ſo mighty an effuſion of bloud, and among ſo manie maſſacres, ſome anger might haue appeared, ſome ſmal touch of reuenge, a litle cruelty, and other like militarie imperfections; Whereupon he shed a riuer of ſcalding teares, aſking forgiuenes of God, whilſt being in this agonie, heard a voice which ſayd; Ceaſe Elzear, ceaſe to afflict thy ſelf, for thy ſinnes are forgiuen thee, but know the feruor of armes, hath ſo throughly heated thee in thy harnes, and ſo much tranſported thee, that thou wentſt very neare to haue loſt my fauour by falling into mortal ſinne; ſo difficult it is in theſe military matters wel to gard, and throughly to arme the heart. The holy man was troubled in mind, vnderſtanding the daunger he fel into, and beſought God rather to chaſtize him in this world, then in the other: it was no ſooner ſpoken, then

then effected, for he was assailed by so sharp a feauer, and so scortched that he complained not, but svveetly sayd, he thought he lay betvveen two beds of fire. Among these horrible torments he recited the *Miserere mei Deus* from the bottome of his heart, and moistned it with a Torrent of teares; you would haue imagined he had been by an inuisible, but not an insensible hand, which scourged him al the time of the *Miserere*. Then a gracious voice was likewise heard, which saied, since you entertaine so sensible griefe; *Al your* sinnes (*Elzear*) *are forgiuen you*, in the meane space he was surprized with a soūd sleep, & at his awakening felt himselfe perfectly recouered. Al his paines seemed a dreame, yet did he notably obserue that speach, and engraued it very deep in his heart, that he might haue lost God's grace in the heate of battaile, and by conuersing amongst

amongſt ſoldiers. This ſharpely penetrated his ſoule, that he no longer loued anie thing but ſolitude, fearing the companie of the wicked might cauſe him to ſuck in the contagious breach of their vices. Good God, if a man wholy God's, with ſo manie precautions, with ſuch aboundance of graces, in ſo short a time hazarded his ſaluation, in ſo iuſt a warre, with ſo infinite care of conſcience; What may the moſt part of men hope, who ſo negligently preſerue their ſoule, nay who ſo eaſily abandon it, and reſigne it ouer as a prey to rauenous paſſions, which gnaw them aliue, & drag them to the dunghil of vices. That which ſtil detained him at Court was the deſire he had, to paie al his fathers debts, and to ſet his ſtate free, and diſcharge his conſcience; Which he ſoone did, and told his *Ladie*, that ſo ſoone as he

ſhould

ſhould be quite of men, he ſhould not long continue in the world. That if God graunted him longer life, he would retire to his own houſe, wholy to giue himſelfe to God, auoid the conuerſation of great men and Lords, which is a burning fire, and a very labyrinth, wherein once engaged, one hath al the troubles of the world to get out of it, and be ſaued.

His

His iourney to Paris, and Embaſſage to the King; With a great ſcandal which happened.

CHAP. XVI.

KING *Robert* deſirous to marie Duke *Charles* his ſonne, found not any alliãce vnder heauen more worthy then with the crowne of *Fraunce*. Theſe lillyes are ſo beautiful, that *Salomon* in al his magnificence, is not ſo admirable, as the leaſt of theſe golden flowers ſprinkled with ſkie colour. He then deſired to haue a Virgin of the Royal bloud of *Fraunce*, to giue her to his ſonne the heire of his Crownes. To which purpoſe

poſe he choſe out Count *Elzear* for this noble Embaſſage. You may wel ſuppoſe it was not without a thouſand excuſes, and natiue Decorums: For indeed the holy man was not very forward in matter of mariage, pomps, & ſuch magnificencies, nay rather it was a death to him. The King perſiſted in his reſolution, & needs muſt he bend that way, and ſwallow the pil, which though gilded, was cõpoſed of wormwood, moſt bitter to the good Count. There was appointed him a Princely Equipage, a Royal traine, and a ſtate worthy of a King. Al the Lords much deſired to be of his followers, that they might ſee the Court of *Fraunce*, and behold the French gallants, who ſubſcribed not in any thing to the Auncients ſo much vaũted. He then tooke along with him the flower of the nobilitie of *Naples*, and appeared in *Fraunce* like a litle King. One cannot relate

relate the entertainement which the French King gaue him, and al the great ones of the kingdome, as wel for loue of the King who had ſent him, as alſo for his own particular worth, and the ſanctitie of his life. Beſides he had a manner of treatie ſo attractiue, that he rauished the hearts of thoſe, with whom he had occaſion.

There was nothing but feaſts vpon feaſts, and thrice happie was he who could haue my Lord Embaſſador in his houſe. He was entertained like a King, and followed like a Saint, and that in *Paris* where God knowes whether ſuch things be welcome or no, and whither they throng to ſee ſuch kind of nouelties: But there hapned a very great ſcandal in his own perſon, which was like to mar al: For as he went through the Cittie waited on by a world of Lords, it fel out that paſſing through Saint *Iames* his ſtreet they

they met a Prieſt who caried the bleſſed Sacrament to a ſick man. Al, proſtrated themſelues on their knees with much edification, and the greateſt Lords bowed to the earth almoſt in the Kennel. Count *Elzear*, who was held for a Saint made no shew, and ſcarcely put his hand to his hat not heeding the Prieſt, nor what he caried. Good God, what a ſcandal! Al *Paris* was quickly poſſeſſed of this indignitie. Courtiers who thinke they haue wel diſſembled al their miſchieffes when they can find any fault in them, who are accounted Demy-Saints, God knowes how much they aggrauated this Act, & what hideous gloſſes they made vpon it. Is this the great Saint of *Prouence*? ſee here a goodly miracle to be put into his Canonization. Behold our Saints, who ſay ſo many beades, yet vouchſafe not to adore the bleſſed Sacrament.

The

The people of *Paris* ſpake the reſt, and aſked whither this Embaſſadour were not an Heretique (there were none ſuch knowne in *Fraunce*, at that time wholy Catholique) or whither he were a Turke, or what? How ſayd they, & are the goodmen of his Coũtrey, ſo bad Chriſtians, as not to adore *Ieſus-Chriſt*, as he paſſeth along? What kind of Saint is this, who belieues not in God? Yet is proclaimed to vs a great Saint. O God of heauen! What a Saint? who ſcandalizeth al *Paris*, and deignes not ſo much as to reuerence the holy Hoaſt. Whilſt our Princes, who are of much greater worth do it, yea the King and Queene. Good God, what ſaied they not. The King preſently was aduertiſed of it, and much wondred, but for honour ſake made no ſhew of it: Yet needs would he vnderſtand what this noueltie meant. My Lord Bishop of *Paris* in his turne

made a feast for Count Elzear, and the whole Count; After dinner he tooke him aside, and smiling saied, (Sir) I pray what ceremonie is vsed at *Naples* when the blessed Sacrament passeth by? I should be glad to vnderstand it from you? Al the world (answered he) prostrateth on the earth when it passeth along, and the King himselfe would be much troubled to haue failed therin. We do it at *Paris* (saieth the Bishop) and I wil speake freely to you, We haue been not a litle amazed to see al men bow on their knees before the holy Pix, and you alone not to do it: But I fully beliewe; they are euil tongues, which cause al these false rumors to be spread False Rumours? sayd the Count, there is nothing more true; & I had rather haue died, then done otherwise, and I must tel you that I am confident, had I done so; I had been an Idolater. If

euer

quet any man were terrified it was the Reuerent Prelat, who durſt not replie, fearing leaſt he might abaſh him in his own houſe. But the Count ſpeaking ſoftly, the Lords who knew the ſecret drew neare, and being deſirous to vnderſtand what was ſpoken, were told the ſpeaches which paſſed between them. (Sir) ſayd one among them, you were thought to be a Saint when you came hither: but we are wel pleaſed, that you are become like one of vs, and ſo they ſought to paſſe it ouer with a cleanly ieſt; al which time the holy Count; no, no, Gentleman, ſayd he, the matter wil not reſt ſo; If I cannot giue you good example, at leaſt I wil not ſcandalize you. My Lord *Bishop* of *Paris*, I entreate you cauſe the Prieſt to be ſent for hither on whom this queſtion riſeth: before I go hence it is fit you vndoubtedly know the truth of the matter.

They ran with al ſpeed to ſeeke him, behold he comes much wondering to ſee himſelfe in ſuch companie, and much the rather, for that he could not imagine what would be demaunded of him. The Count ſpake preſently and ſayd (Sir) I haue entreated my Lord your Paſtour to ſend for you, to the end you might plainly tel him, what you lately caried to the ſick man in the Pix; and that you may not wrong your ſelfe, we know the truth of the matter, wherefore ingenuouſly confeſſe it. The poore Preiſt, became as white as ſnow, and thought he ſhould faint, nor was his tongue able to vtter ſo much as two words. The Biſhop imagined the good man was terrified to behold himſelfe encompaſſed with the prime Lords of the Kingdome, who al fixed their eyes on him, and ſayd, why anſwere you not to my Lord the Count, who doth

doth you the honour to ſpeak to you? Behold aboundant teares began to diſtil from his eyes, ſo that not replying at al, he fel on both his knees. (Sir) I moſt humbly craue pardon: Pardon? ſayd the Biſhop, what is the matter, what offence haue you giuen: Al men much aſtoniſhed, opening eyes and eares expected to heare ſome nouelty. (Sir) ſayd the poore man, ſince we ought to giue glory to God & Truth, I muſt confeſſe a diſaſter is happened to me, which no liuing man could know, had it not been that God reuealed it to my Lord Embaſſadour. A merchant had been at confeſſion with me, who much preſſing me to bring him the bleſſed Sacrament, I told him plainly, I might not; for he being bound to reſtitution of ſomething which he owed, and loth to do it, I reputed him not in the ſtate of ſaluation, nor fit to receiue the precious body of

our

our Sauiour, his Kindred came and threatned me in my houſe and with lowd words proteſted, if ſo I ſcandalized their houſe, & family, they would vndoubtedly do me ſome affront, and attempt vpon my life, (why ſhould I tel a lye) I was afraid, I confeſſe, and feare being an il Councellour vpon one ſide, I replied not to wound my conſcience, and on the other likewiſe not to haue my bodie wounded, or to be in daunger of worſe. I put an Hoaſt not conſecrated into the holy Pixe, for the bleſſed Sacrament, and verily it was nothing but a fine vnleauened wafer, and now behold the vndeniable truth, whereof I, with ioyned hands craue pardon. I pray aske not whither al theſe Lords were much abashed or no, for they looked one vpon an other, like men dropped out of the clouds, and were ashamed they ſo rashly had cenſured the holy *Count*, who

who they ſaw had had a moſt particular reuelation from God, of a ſecret, which ſcarcely Angels know. Al of them asked him forgiuenes, and eſteemed him as a Saint: The Bishop of *Paris* moſt affectionately embraced him, and let the King, and the whole City of *Paris* vnderſtand what had paſſed: He no longer was looked on as a *Count* of Prouence, but as a *Saint* of *Paradiſe*; What was done with the Prieſt is nothing pertinent to the courſe of this Hiſtorie. This accident greatly encreaſed the reputation of this diuine Embaſſadour, ſo that he obtained of *Charles* the fourth, al he demaunded, and moſt worthily acquited himſelfe in his charge. He vvas a Sun in the Court of *Fraunce*, and a true mirrour of Goodnes: But Alas! Hovv admirable are the Councels of God, vvhilſt he came to ſeeke for a Virgin of *Fraunce*, to affie her in the name

name of the *Duke* his Maister; he matched himselfe to a sharp feauer, which caused him to espouse both a Tomb, and Death.

A Summarie of his Vvil, his last sicknes, his happie end, and torments in the agonies of Death.

CHAP. XVII.

VHILST Man liues, it is the mouth that for the most part speaketh, and which many times betrayeth, & giues the lye to the heart; but when Death doth approach it is the heart which speakes, and the conscience that articulates the words

words. Neuer is a man better knowne, then when he is to die, or mourneth at his death, & hath not any thoughts but for Eternity. So likewiſe the laſt words are held for the Oracles of the ſoule, and wils (to ſay truly) are the precious reliques of our paſſed life. Some men ſpeake like Saints, when they are neare to death, but Saints at that time diſcourſe like Seraphins, and their laſt ſpeaches are cõmonly words of fire, and golden ſentences worthy of Eternitie. A man ful of vertue, and piety, did me the fauour to let me ſee *S. Elzear's* wil, pieces moſt neceſſarie to perfect the Hiſtorie of his life; I wil here render you the iuice & marrow of them, to auoid a thouſand repetitions, a thouſand vncouch phraſes, and a thouſand perplexities and ſubtilities, neceſſarie to auoid ſuits, but vnprofitable for Hiſtorie: Before I open the matter, I coniure you who read

read this, if you be able to make a Wil, imitate the goodnes of the holie *Count*, and ſeaſonably to prouide for your affaires, and make cleare the accounts of your paſſed life. So not like thoſe fooles, who expects the laſt breath of their life to make their Wils, when their ſoule is on the brinke of their lips, and Death alreadie, harboured in the reſt of the bodie, when they no longer haue ſpeach, ſpirit, knowledge, memorie, or iudgment; yea ſcarcely ſtrēgth to breath, then is the time when they diſpoſe of their affaires, and open the embroiled folds, and labyrinths of their life, from whence, being in good health, & ful vigor of age, they could not haue iſſued forth without ſweating bloud and water: Howſoeuer, they performe it crookedly and croſſly, and manie times words muſt be wrong out of their mouths, and they

made

made to ſpeake and ſeale, what they vnderſtand not, and on which they neuer dreamed: Then they make their confeſſion not knowing what they ſaie, and it muſt be imagined what they would ſaie, and very often neither themſelues, nor the poore Confeſſour know where they are. Then Death comes, and God knowes how much the ſoule is terrified ſeing it ſelf in ſuch a ſtate to appeare before the rigorous Tribunal to receiue the eternal decree without appeale, or reuiew. *S. Elzear* about ſome ſix yeares before his death, gaue himſelfe the ſtroke of death, and would needs die to affaires, before his death to the world. Being then in perfect health, in the flower of his age; Behold how he diſpoſed of his perſon, of his goods moueable and immoueable.

In the name of IESVS-CHRIST, and the glorious *Virgin Amen.* In the

yeare

yeare of the Incarnation of our Lord and Sauiour. 1317. the 18.th of Iuly of the fifteenth Indiction, be it knowne to al men by theſe preſents; That we *Elzear* of *Sabran* Count of *Arian*, Lord of *Anſois* by the grace of God ſound in bodie, mind, and intention being deſirous to preuent the daungers of death, and fearing to be ſurprized, and wel knowing, man is mortal, and that it is a ſingular Act of wiſdome, to recal al things into the ſecret retirement of the heart which concerne it, to remember things paſt, diſpoſe of the preſent, fore ſee futurs, without errour either in matter of right or fact, and not being preuented, or circumuented by anie, of our own meer motion, and free wil, at the inſtance of our ſelfe we haue made our preſent Teſtament, and diſpoſe of our laſt Wil, of our bodie, our goods, lands, appartenances,

ſtably

ſtably, and in the beſt manner may be, by the aduiſe of a ſage perſon, al which we ordaine in ſuch ſort, as enſueth. Firſt we haue choſen for the place of our reſt, and the burial of our bodie the Conuent of the Friers Minors of *Apt*, & we wil that after it shal pleaſe God we die, that in the ſame yeare, in any place whereſoeuer our deceaſe hapneth our body be caried to the ſayd place, and there buried. Beſides we wil and ordaine that on the daye of our death our ſaid bodie be clothed, with the habit of the *Franciſcans*, and we caried clothed, and buried as the Religious of that Order, that they diſpoſe of vs as of the meaneſt among them, without mourning, ceremonie, or anie ornaments but their own, and that there be not ſet vpon my bodie, or vnder it, anie glorious hearce, otherwiſe then as for them.

Item we take for the Comfort of our

our poore ſoule, the ſumme of three thouſand florins of rent, that maniel Maſſes may be ſaied for the peace of my ſoule. One hundred florins to the Conuent of *Apt*, &c. He particularly reckoned vp the Churches of his Lord ſhips, the ſpittles, Hoſpitals, & Conuents of the Order of *S. Francis*, yea particular Religious men whom he had knowne, and conuerſed with in his life time, and vvho had done him ſome ſeruice; His Page, his Gentlemen, al his houſhold-ſeruants, euen to the Cooks and ſcullions vvhom he called by their names, hauing great care that none of his people ſhould be without gratification, beſides the vvages, vvhich he vvilled to be payed to the vtmoſt farthing. He added afterward name by name al the gentlewomen and Maide ſeruants of his W fe, and not any one eſcaped either his memorie or liberality.

Item

Item he gaue a preſent to King *Robert* for an aſſured pledge of his inuiolable ſeruice, and eternal amitie.

Item he left to the Counteſſe *Delphina* his deare wife, the enioying of al his goods, moueable, vnmoueable, ſiluer, veſſel, iewels, to conclude, al, vvith ful povver to diſpoſe of al at, her pleaſure, not bound to giue an account to any, and this (ſayd he) for the acceptable ſeruices ſhe hath done vs, vvhich ſhe daily doth with ſo much charitie, and which we hope she wil performe to the laſt. But he expreſly enioyned her, that if anie Debts were ovving, and Obligation, any wtong done to whom ſoeuer of his tenants or other, that ſhe ſhould ſatisfie it ſpeedily and exactly.

Item to his vncles Religious, and Eccleſiaſtiques he bequeathed an annuall ſomme of money.

Item he left Coũt *William of Sabran* his

his brother his vniuerſal haire, and in caſe he died without heires of his bodie lawfully begotten, he ſubſtituted his Kindred one after an other in their degrees, without doing iniurie to anie, with ſo particular a care, and ſo replenished with Iuſtice that therein the ſincerity of his ſoule, & tendernes of his heart appeared. Laſtly he concluded that al aboue written ſhould be executed punctually, and that his preſent Teſtament be reduced by vnderſtanding and conſcientious men to a neceſſary forme, therein obſeruing al formalities: He diſapproued and annulled any other Wil made by him, or any manner of bequeſt, & will'd, that if peraduenture he ſhould die without other declaration, codicil, or diſpoſe, that this preſent Writting ſhould haue ful force, and abſolute effect.

Made at *Tollon*, in the yeare of grace

grace 1317. the 18. of Iuly; Al ſigned by himſelfe, by ſeauen ſelected and named witneſſes, by two Notaries, & al authentically done.

Obſerue I beſeech you the rare vertues of this holy Count in the ſimplicity of his Wil. Firſt, what thinke you of his Prouidence to ſee a young Lord at the age of ~~twelue~~ two, in the flower of his youth, in the moſt eminent degree of honour, when al things in the world ſmiled on him, in the vigorous forces of his life to thinke vpon making of a Wil, to diſpoſe of his tombe as coolely as if he had talked of a ſlight progreſſe, ſo much to feare to die with out a Wil, and leaue the world vnſatisfied! How many great men paſſe into the other world with conſciences ſurcharged with a thouſand affaires, leauing their houſe tyed to a thouſand reſtitutions, heires engaged vpon a thouſand ſuits, their brothers together

by the eares, al the world ſcandalized to ſee people which were ſo wiſe to diſpatch others buſineſſes, ſo il to haue done their own damning themſelues to enrich children, and after damning them by too much giuing them their libertie, and ouer-glutting them with riches.

Secondly, behold the noblenes of his heart in not ſuffering any one to do him the leaſt ſeruice, which he requited not, ſo much he feared to be vngrateful.

Beſides ſee the tẽdernes of his ſoule, expreſly cõmanding that Creditours ſhould be ſought out euerie where, & al ſuch as were aggrieued in any kind; That ſeruãts ſhould be aſked whither their wages were payed or not, and that no man aliue should be diſpleaſed with him; He wel knew the great ones deuoure the leſſer, they ſup vp their bloud & marrow; nay make them ſuck

in

in their words, they not daring to cõplaine whilst the other liues, but after death they scratch their graues, curse their names and memories, and gnaw with sharp teeth their notorious and inhumane crueltie. The holy man was desirous his memory should be entertained with benediction by al the world, and that the bloud of the poore might not crie against him. Many when they can no longer serue the world, dispose themselues to the seruice of God, and giue the dregs of their life to our Sauiour; Sinns rather leaue them, then they sinning. It is a kind of despaire, which makes them honest.

Elzear in the brightest lustre of fortune, & in the most resplendent daye of his spring-tide, commanded himselfe to be clothed like a Religious man of the third Order when he died, and would haue no other greatnes but

the pouerty of *S. Francis*, no other pomp at his ſepulcher; But the holy beggerie and extreame penurie of the Religious of this Order, which erect no trophey, but of perfect pouerty. One may wel ſay he litle minded worldly riches, and vanity, ſince he had not any ambition, but to ſee himſelfe on a Beere, like a worme of the earth al naked, and adorned as a poore ſillie nouice of the third order of that great Seraphin of the earth.

Laſtly conſider the infinit care he had to be comforted with the holy Sacrifice of the Maſſe, laying ſundry fountaines in aboue twẽty Churches, that after his death he might the ſooner come out of Purgatorie. Good God, what is this? They who go directly to heauen, and to a very high place there are ſo curious, that God be prayed vnto for the repoſe of their ſoules, and are ſo apprehenſiue of the flames

flames of Purgatory; whilſt wordlings, ſo litle reſpect al this, that they almoſt accoũt no money more loſt, then that which is bequeathed to the Church for Maſſes. It is a iuſt iudgment of God, and a punishment out to their euil liues; for moſt part, who die being throwne into hel, haue nothing to doe with Maſſes; and ſuch as go to Purgatorie by Gods iuſt permiſſion ſtaie there very long, and haue in a manner no greater griefe, then to find ouer-late the great facilitie they had to haue defended themſelues from theſe inſupportable torments. That which their dogs gnaw, what foote-boyes eate, which is waſted in their howſes; were enough to make them to purchaſe Paradiſe (Wretches that they are!) yet haue they not vouchſafed to thinke on it.

Whilſt they horrible burne, my young Maiſters their heires cut one

anothers

anothers throats, in the diuiding of the il gotten goods, and much repine at the litle they giue in doing some sleight seruice for his rest, who perhaps shal not haue one sole moment of repose, burning in the furnaces of the suffering Church.

Elzear went much an other waye, the soule of his Testament, was the care he had to haue his soule prayed for, and those thousand Crownes of rent which he left at that time were of more worth then two thousand pistols in this Age, al of gold. My opinion is that had he followed the motiues of his deuotion, and had not been relentiue for most important consideratiõs, he had giuen al to God, and to *S. Francis* his Order, which he loued as the apple of his eye; For what would he haue denyed them to whom he had resigned his body, his heart, charge of his soule, and his whole affections.

The

The Cogitation of Saints, and of worldly men are very different; Thoſe, would giue al the world to God: Theſe, would take al from him; Thoſe, thinke they poſſeſſe nothing of the world, but what they offer to God; Theſe, neuer lament anie thing ſo much, nor ſuppoſe anie thing more loſt, then that which euen with griefe they gaue for the ſeruice of God, and the good of their ſoules.

After this laſt diſpoſe, he told *Delphina* he deſired to retire from the Court to make abode in his houſe of *Anſoys*, and wholy to deuote himſelfe to God and heauen, and no longer to loue anie things here below on earth. He enioyed the Paradiſe of this ſweet ſolitude ſome ſpace of time, but the iourney into *Fraũce*, whereof I ſpake, brake off his deſignes. Being at *Paris* he ſought to diſpatch his affaires, and deſired nothing but his litle Hermi-

tage

tage of *Anſois*. God diſpoſed otherwiſe of it, and permitted ſo ſoone as he had concluded the negotiation of his Embaſſage, that a sharp feauer ſeized on him, and laied him in the bed of death; He preſently felt he had receiued the ſtroke of death, and had a ſecret inſpiration of it, ſo that neglecting al manner of temporal affayres, he reſerued no other care to himſelfe, but of his ſaluation, nor opened his ſoule to anie other thoughts, then of God and Eternitie. Good ſeruants of God in what poſture ſoeuer they be, euer make the ſplendour of their vertues appeare, put *Elzear* into armes, he is a true *Macchabee*; put him into an Oratorie, he is one of the moſt contemplatiue Hermits; put him into the Court, he is a *Dauid*, who with his pious harpe charmeth the euil ſpirits, which beſet the Court, ; put him into a mariage-ſtate, he is another

Ioſeph

Ioſeph, a hushand and a Virgin together; put him into an Embaſſage, he is a very *Moſes*; laſtly put him vpon ſtraw, and in a bed he is a *Iob*, of a patience inuincible. You haue ſeen him in health the mirrour of men, behold him in his ſicknes as an Idea of perfection, and learne to die wel, ſeing how he diſpoſeth himſelfe. The firſt thing he did was to cal the reuerent Father *Frauncis Mairon* Prouincial of the Order of *S. Frauncis*, one of the moſt eminent Diuines of his time, he made his general confeſſion to him with much effuſion of teares, hauing not one mortal ſinne vpon his conſciẽce. He daily heard holy Maſſe in a chappel of the pallace where the King had cauſed him to be lodged, and was preſent thereat with a deuotion worthy of himſelfe, and the miſtery; He confeſſed almoſt each daye of his ſicknes, and much oftener, and more willingly

gly ſpake to the Phiſitian of his ſoule, then his Bodie. His maladie cauſed him to haue mortal fits, and moſt sharp agonies; He was enforced to giue a litle ſcope to his heart, oppreſſed with vehement dolours; He cried out, Ah No! It was the paine which cried, out, not he, for his heart had neuer learned to complaine. Alas! nothing leſſe, ſo farr, was he from complaint, that contrarywiſe he loued nothing ſo much as to ſuffer for his God; Outcries are not impatience, but a ſweet diſcharge of paine, which cauſeth ſore pangues, and oppreſſeth the heart; He was moſt obedient to his Phiſitian, ſtretching out his arme to be launced and cut, as if they had gone about to let a ſtatue bloud; He ſwallowed al the bitterneſſes of medicines and found worme-wood taſtful, he making an infuſion into it of a litle of the gaul of *Ieſus-Chriſt*. Neuer

was

was there ſeen a more tractable ſick-man, the Infirmier ruled him vpon al occaſions without contradiction, the Chirurgion pricked him as oft as he pleaſed, the Phiſitian made him ſwallowe al without diſpute; The Confeſſour diſpoſed him to God, and al good without trouble; God managed his heart at ful libertie; He ſuffered mortal paines, and had meane while a cheereful and contented coũtenance, a ſpeach ſweet and holy, ſpeaking of nothing but God and Eternity; He comforted al thoſe who came to conſolate him; His delight was to talke of death, and the worlds vanity: He commanded from time to time to haue the dolorous paſſion of CHRIST, to be read to him, ſighes, ſobs, and teares fel from his heart and ſufficiently witneſſed the comforts he felt among his horrible ſufferings; he often repeated with an accent languiſhingly affectionate

nate that verſicle of Dauid. *Thou (O Lord) the ſweet ſupport of my life, beholding the ſilly wretch tired out in the bed of miſerie, thou wilt ſweetly redouble his ſtrength, and wilt vouchſafe with thy diuine hands to ſoften the bed againe, whereon his euils haue layd him, taking pitty of his cruel paines.* He ſpake words, or rather flames, and arrowes of fire, which his heart ſhaft after ſhaft holily ſhot towards heauen, darting them into the heart of God himſelfe. Sweet IESVS, I recōmend my heart vnto thee! O my deare Loue take pittie of this poore ſick-man! One while he ſayd: Ah Mother of mercy, now, or euer, I expect thy fauorable aſſiſtance! Paradiſe Alas! Sweet Paradiſe, when ſhal we ſee thee! Speaking theſe ſweet words he diſſolued into teares, & rent the hearts of ſuch as were night and daye preſent with him.

He felt himſelfe interiourly forced and

and inſpired by God to reueale one thing, which al his life time he had cloſely hidden and shut vp in his boſome. Deare freinds (ſaid he) the euil man is ſaued by the good woman, for it is God's wil I tel you, that hauing maried *Delphina* a virgin, I leaue her a virgin in this mortal life; our chaſt mariage hath been an innocent fraternitie, and a Tye of hearts and ſoules, both of vs inuiolably preſeruing Virginitie. Frequent teares fel from the eies of al there preſent, much (verily) amazed to heare ſuch a wōder of God, and very glad to be preſent at the moſt happie death of ſo eminent a perſonage.

Beginning to decline they brought him the bleſſed ſacrament: who euer ſaw a notable communion might haue ſeen this of *Elzear's*, Good God, what eies moiſtned with teares? what words enflamed with loue! what profound humili-

humilities, and what aboundance of deuotion! Can you thinke ſuch a man would endure to communicate at eaſe in his bed, and at the approach of CHRIST not proſtrate himſelfe to the earth, and had it been poſſible to the loweſt center of it? This being in this manner done, he entreated Extreme Vnction to be brought him, that he might ſeaſonably take it with compoſed ſenſe, and much merit; He himſelfe anſwered, and with a ſtable accent; eſpecially when theſe diuine words were pronounced: *Per ſanctam Crucem, & Paſſionem tuam, libera nos Domine.* He then lifted vp his voice, and ſpake theſe expreſſe words. *Hæc eſt ſpes mea, in hac volo mori.* This is al my hope, and I wil die in it. Meane while the holy ceremonie of Extreme Vnction was finished. My Pen trembleth, and my heart dares paſſe no further, not ſo much for terrour

rour at the death of ſuch a man, who was as it were neuer to die; but for a ſtraunge accident which happened to him at his deceaſe. Good God how profound are thy iudgments, and ſecrets inſcrutable! I feare to aſtonish my Reader in relating that, which I muſt notwithſtāding reſolutely ſpeak. When the holie man was in his agony were much amazed to ſee his countenance quite changed, like to a man affrighted, who beheld ſome dreadful thing. He was as one who diſputed with ſome bodie that much preſſed him, and who could not beare the counterbuſſe and aſſaults. Al preſent proſtrated themſelues on the earth to pray for him. In this combat as it were raiſing himſelfe on his ſeate with al his ſtrength, he ſayd: My God how great is the power of euil ſpirits? This word was a ſtab with a dagger in the hearts of al there preſent, fearing

ſome

some ruin. A while after he cried out, O good IESVS! How much do we ow thee: For thy dolorous paſſion hath ouercome al the powers of hel, ſome ſmal time paſſed, when ſodainly he ſaied: Ay me, Alas, I wholy ſubmit my ſelfe to the iudgment of my God! Al this ſuſpending the minds of thoſe who were preſent; it (verily) much troubled them to behold ſuch a man in ſo great a perplexitie, not knowing what would be the event of it. Finally after a long Diſpute he lowly and ful of comfort cried. I haue ouercome (God be thanked) moſt aſſuredly, I haue, I haue ouercome, and at the ſame inſtant his countenance appeared with his former ſerenity, al ouerſpred with a grace, and moſt pleaſing ſweetnes, and which taſted of I know not what kind of Diuinity. It is related a voyce was heard, which ſayd, *Euge ſerue bone, & fidelis intra in gaudium*

dium Domini tui. In the midſt of theſe delights, he happilly yeilded vp the ghoſt between the armes of his Creatour, and ended his miraculous life in the yeare 1323. the 27. of September, and the 28, or 38. of his age, he left behind him the odour of his gracious vertues, and the reputation of a Saint; His face was ſo beautiful after his death that none could be ſatisfied with beholding it.

Imagine what throngs in *Paris*, what honours, what funerals, were made for him being ſo eminent a Lord, an Ambaſſadour from a King, and ſo great a Saint. As he had been of the third order of *S. Francis*, ſo was he buried in his habit, and committed to *Cordeliers* of *Paris*. That litle paine he had in his agonie wrought a great effect, and perhaps God of purpoſe permitted it: For it is fit you know there was in that place a Lord of qualitie,

who had his conſcience ſurcharged with a thouſand enormous ſinns, which he very long had concealed in his putrifyed ſoule: He ruminating the words of *S. Elzear*, the sharpnes of his paſſage, the combat he had ſuffered in his laſt agonie, and aboue al; that word, which was a thunder-ſtroke to him. *Oh how powerful is the deuil!* Al this together ſtrooke his heart ſo forcibly, that in the inſtant, he tooke the good father of S. *Francis* Order there preſent aſide, and with-drawing into a chappel caſt himſelfe on his knees before him, powred forth aboundance of teares, made confeſſion of his whole life, and made a notable change in his manners; becomming much other, then he had hitherto been!

The Translation of his Body, and the miracles which followed his most happy death.

CHAP. XVIII.

I WIL not tel you the ſorrowes of the Kings of *Fraunce* and *Naples*, of Duke *Charles*, of thoſe two ſoueraigne Courts, the honour which was rendred to his bodie, and to his memorie worthy of Eternitie. They are things, which cannot be wel expreſſed, and I had rather you would imagine thē within your ſelues. God accuſtometh to open the hearts and hands of al the world, to caſt

lillies and roſes by handfuls on the tombs of thoſe who in their life times were the ſcorne and reproach of men; Such an one laughed at *S. Elzears* life, who afterward deplored with ſcalding teares, & ſweetly moiſtned his ashes, curſing the bitter ſcoffes wherewith he had tainted his innocencie, and tarniſhed the luſtre of his holie conuerſation.

In the ſame yeare his bodie was caried towards the Citie of *Apt*, as he had ordained. But God willing by the vertue of miracles to diſcouer to the world the ſanctitie of his good ſeruant (which himſelfe had buried in the tombe of his humilitie) cauſed a ſtrange wonder, at the entrance into *Auignon*. The Annals of that time witnes that the body arriuing at *Villeneufue* which is on this ſide of the bridge, al the bels of *Auignon* of themſelues rang out, and began to make ſuch a iangling

iangling, that neuer were men ſeen ſo much aſtonished. No man knew ought at al of it; The Arch-bishop being demaunded what he thought of it, knew not what to ſaie; manie publique praiers were ſaied, to vnderſtand from God, what theſe Bels meant, a general proceſſion was made, commandment was giuen litle children clothed in white should go before, and that the reſt in order ſhould follow, trie if ſome miracle might be diſcouered. The litle children by an inſtinct from heauen, went directly ouer the bridge, towards *Ville-neufue*: at the ſame time not knowing what hapned at *Auignon*, they who caried the leaden Coffin wherein the holie bodie was, walked along, and made account to paſſe through *Auignon*, to come to the citie of *Apt*, and beare this dead Corps to the appointed Tombe. So ſoone as theſe little children

dren came neare the Coach, by an inſpiration from God, they fel on their knees, and with ioyned hands turned towards the coffin not knowing what it was : In the ſame inſtant behold al the hearts of the people of *Auignon* ſtrooken with I know not what kind of holy feare; they did as the children, they proſtrated themſelues on their knees ; it was asked what they caried in this coffin couered with black; they ſaid it was the body of good *Elzear* Count of *Arian*, which they bare into *Prouence*, to be buried at *Apt*. Ah! ſaied the Bishop ; See here vndoubtedly the Treaſure God ſent vs , and behold what the miracle of bels meaneth.

The Coach was brought in triumph into *Auignon* , where this ſacred pledge was honoured with al manner of magnificence and deuotion (*Auignon* being a Citie replenished with pietie

piety) and with great greife was it ſuffered to goe out, but there was no meanes to hold it againſt its liking. At the departure of it from the City, would you thinke it, the bels of themſelues againe threw out a ſound and made it euidently appeare by this redoubling, that infallibly it was for *Elzear*, this ioy was expreſſed. It is ſayd the like miracle of bels happened alſo in other places through which this holy body paſſed, and eſpecially at the Citty of Apt where day and night they perpetually ſounded So true it is, that the dead of God's ſeruants is precious before his eyes, and their bleſſed bones are of power to do al kind of miracles. The concourſe to his ſacred tombe was very great, and laſted long, for our Sauiour tooke delight to do many miracles to honour this his ſo worthy ſeruant,

Now

Now the good Counteſſe in this loſſe receiued two great fauours from heauen. For at the ſame inſtant that her huſband died at *Paris*, ſhe had a reuelation of it, and told it to King *Robert* and to the *Queen* who were at *Auignon* with the Pope; They would haue put her into a Dump, ſaying we muſt not eaſily belieue reuelations; that loue vſed to preſent thoſe vnto vs in abſence as dead, whom we much affected; that no poaſt was arriued from the Court of *Fraunce*, & a thouſand ſuch imaginations, but ſhe was two ſure of her loſſe, and afterward it was verifyed that in the very inſtant when he yeilded vp his happy ſoule to God, the poore *Counteſſe* ſpake it, too wel in her heart reſenting the momēt, of it. The other fauour was, that the poore *Lady* vnable to ſtay the teares ſhe powred forth, not ſo much for the loſſe of her deare Spouſe (which ſhe

tooke

tooke as cõming from the hãd of God) as for feare leaſt his ſoule might be puniſhed in the paines of Purgatory, it pleaſed God to permit, that *Elzear* appeared vnto her reſplendent as a Sun, aſſuring her that God of his infinit mercy had placed him in Paradiſe, and that ſhe ſhould be couragious in the ſeruice of our *Lord*, to the end they might ſee one another in Eternity neuer to be ſeperated. Her life wil ſhew the account ſhe made of this aduiſe, & of the good example her deare huſbãd had giuen her, whilſt they as Angels liued together. She in *Apt* cauſed al the honours to be done him, which might be wiſhed, and which ſuch a man could deſerue. Neuer were any people more aſtonished then they who were at his burial for it is affirmed Angelical voyces were heard in the aire, which made a heauenly Muſick. The good & venerable Fathers of *S. Francis* ſeing

seing great treasure which God had bestowed on them, forgat no part of al might be done in such an occasiõ much the rather becauſe at the comming of the bleſſed body their Curch was filled with ſo fragrant an odour, that they manifeſtly ſaw, it was a perfume from heauen, and a pleaſing ſauour of the ſanctity of his life. This houſe repleniſhed with piety and vertues worthy of *S. Francis* his children, hath ſtil continued to afford al kind of honour to the ſacred body, and the ſweet memory of the holy Count.

I wil not here make a Catalogue of his miracles; which are very manie in number, and of al kinds; The aſſiſtance this good *Saint* gaue to the King of *Arragon* in his battels, was the cauſe that he expreſly went in perſon vnto *Prouence* to giue thanks to *S. Elzear* for the ſauour he had obtained of God for him. In my opinion the moſt admira-

ble

ble of al his miracles was, to haue made of a young Count ſo great a Saint. I more eſteem it that he liued in mariage with ſo faire and vertuous a Lady inuiolably preſeruing the flower of his Virginity, then to haue raiſed (as he did) eight dead perſons, and wrought ſo many miracles. It is euer a great miracle (ſayd *S. Bernard*) to make of a man an Angel; but it is the wonder of wonders to make a great Saint of a great Lord. I tremble to thinke how few of ſo many thouſands of theſe great ones, are ſaued : Of al Saints there is not ſo ſmal a number of any as of Lords, and worldly great ones; The Martyrologies of the Church reckon vp ſo few, that it grieues me; and of theſe few greateſt number were Martyrs, or men who ſeaſonably forſooke greatnes, leaſt greatnes might ruine them; or they were women, or people who by great ſufferings were

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(as it were) enforced to let the world dye in their hearts, rather then that their hearts dyed in the world, but persons who liued in the Court, who there died, who haue been Saints, or who there saued themselues, It is verily a feareful thing to see how smal the nũber of these *Phœnixe's* is. See here the number of Saints, drawne out of the Books of the Church; One Emperour, Out Alas! One is not much! Fiue Emperours, eighteen Kings, six Queenes, Foure Kings sonnes, six Kings daughters, two Dukes, one Dutches; Three Princes, two Princesses, one Cõstable, fiue Counts, two Coũtesses, fortie-two Lords, foureteen great Ladies, fifteen principal Officers managīg great charges; The total 127. Good God, how smal a number! and yet the most part were Martyrs, & almost made by force, or of such as fled out of the world. O how true is that dreadful speech which pro-

proceeded from the infaillible mouth of IESVS-CHRIST, that it is impoſſible a rich man should enter into heauen. I know that beſides theſe cannonized Saints, there be manie of them in heauen, who are ſaued, I hope ſo, and I wil belieue it; but O my God theſe manie are few in effect, compared to others of other profeſſions, and in reſpect of the countles number of rich men, and Princes? Alas! Alas! So much the more eminent is the ſanctity of *Elzear* as that in the euil climate of Court he neuer drew in the contagious aire of vice, and amidſt ſo many thornes knew how to preſerue the Lillie of his puritie, and the diamond of his Conſtancie; Verily he alone is able to iudge of al the potentats of the Earth and of al great men who belieue one cannot be at Court without being damned. He alone wil make al humane nature, and al worldly

dly rich men ashamed, since in the flower of his age, drenched in the Oceans of Court, sitting at lushious tables, enuironed by delights, and pleasures of the world; he could find the waie to be saued, & faithfully to serue God, whithout euer defiling his conscience with one sole mortal sinne. Nay let me speake but one word & so make an end, he alone is able to winne al the world to vertue, since being a maried mā he could be a virgin; being a great Lord, he could be poore of the third order of S. *Francis*; being a Courtier, he relished the sweetnes of Hermitages, and diuine contemplations; being a General in armies, he found meanes to arme his heart with armour tempred in heauen, and to preserue himselfe as vnspotted as in the silence of a cloister, or a wildernes; lastly beīg a young man, rich, handsome, ful of honour; he could performe so much by the grace of God; as to be made

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from a poore Count of Prouẽce, great Archangel in the Kingdome of God, where the leaſt Saint is more rich then al the Potentats of the Earth they of Arian haue ſo handled the matter that they haue the shin bone of their holy Count a relique which they worthily haue adorned, and held in great veneration. His father and mother reſt at S. Laurence a Conuent of *Franciſcans* at *Naples*. My heart moues my pen to ſet down here ſome ſweet praier to this holy *Saint* whoſe life I write, but I had rather do it by the lips of *Peter of Sabrã* of the ſame houſe of *S. Elzear*. Wherefore piouſly to cõfort my *Reader* I am willing here to expreſſe the prayer he made for him in a poeme in old *French*, natiue, plaine, and without ornament, as hauing more reaſon, and piety in it, then rime. We are more quaint in this Age then thoſe old *Gaules*; but they in recompence had much more wiſdom. See here the ſweet Hymne.

HYMNE.

MOST glorious Count, who didſt with honours shine,
Deriud from Arian [which thy vertues bleſſe
Baron) extracted from a noble Line,
Goad in atchieuments; great in happineſſe:
(Holy Anzias) whom the heauens did fill
With plenteous influence of grace: To thee
I offer vp my ſelfe, be mindful ſtill
Of thy poore ſeruant, euen for charity.
For I am Peter, ſprung from thy bleſt ſtock':
Like thee ſurnamd of Sabran, therefore pray
In humble wiſe, when death with dreadful shock
Shal come to clowd with darkneſſe my laſt day,
Thou wouldſt vouchſafe (my neare ally'ed to bring
Thy helping hand, and intercede for me
(Thy poore vnworthy Seruant) to my King,
My Father, God, out of thy Clemency.
O Bleſſed Saint of Heauen, to God moſt deare
Indeu'd with vertues, and with vice ſo farre
From being ſtaynd [while thou went liuing here)
That al thy ſtudy, and thy daily care
Was ſtill to ſerue thy maker, with a heart
Free from al mortal ſinne. Thus may mine bee
That from Gods law I neuer may depart
To damne my ſoule in endleſſe miſery.

Thou

Thou ſtrictly didſt obſerue Gods holy Law:
Firſt Pride (t'Humility moſt oppoſite)
By thee was chac'd away. Still thou didſt draw
The poore by frequent almes; and thy delight
Vvas to be ſeruing them; whom hauing fed,
With the beſt meate of thy moſt plenteous ſtore,
By an expreſſe command, vnto their bed
Thy ſeruants did at night conduct the poore.

That grieuous ſinne, thou knew'ſt beſt to withſtand
(Infamous ſinne of Auarice) being ſo free
In giuing, that thy open-liberal hand
Did none put by: But thoſe, who came to thee
And begged for Chriſt his ſake, without delay
Were inſtantly relieu'd. To great and ſmal
Thou gau'ſt alike Chriſt Ieſus in them al.

'Twas thy good Counteſſe, who perſwaded thee
T'exhibit vnto Chriſt, a Virgin chaſt,
Delphina 'twas, Miſtris of purity,
Aduis'd thee to preſerue it; which thou haſt,
Since firſt thou didſt accord to her deſire,
With al thy heart and ſoule embracing this
Whereby thou didſt to heauenly ioyes aſpire,
To liue a Virgin in eternal bliſſe.

That vertue moſt benigne, (Patience the meeke)
(That oppoſite to Vvrath, and angry ſpeach)
Vvas thine entirely: Thou didſt euer ſeeke

Firme peace with al (which doth admit no breach:
And he, who murmur'd with and enuious heart,
Or oft in ſtrife with others did contend
Out of thy houſe was forced to depart,
Although he were a neceſſary freind.

Thou didſt (Alas!) chaſtiſe both day and night
Thy feeble body, How could [then) by thee
(While powerful Temp'rance did ſweetly ſway)
Be entertaynd the ſinne of Gloutonny?
Suppres'd by faſting thrice a weeke at leaſt,
Which was to thee (as no man can deny);
A lingering payne (ſith pleaſure tis to feaſt)
Whilſt thou thy fainting fleſh didſt mortify.

Enuy, o're thee got not the vpper hand,
Thou didſt not grudge at others, nor aſpire
To th'honours which they had, nor to their land,
Like thoſe who do abound, yet more deſire:
Such emulation ne're ſeiz'd on thy hart,
Nor vaine ambition ſeeking how to riſe,
But ſtill thy thoughts aym'd at the better part
Which was a glorious Crowne in Paradiſe.

That noble vertue Diligence with Care
Thou, al thy life, didſt euer entertaine
Wherewith (Neglect) could neuer haue a share
(An enemy to Chriſt] who did ſuſtaine
Great labours. Therefore paines thou didſt embrace,
But from al Sloth and Idleneſſe didſt fly:

For which thy ſoule (on Earth indu'de with grace)
In glory raignes with Chriſt eternally.
Ere I could name, and number by retayle
The vertues of thy body, and thy mind,
My tongue would faulter, Memory would faile
There were ſo many in one breaſt confin'd;
So many that no Oratour, with veyne
As fluent, as was Cicero's can ſumme
Them vp; nor by Diuine can be expreſt
[Though he from Fraunce, Spaine, Hungary do come)
Vvhich were enclos'd within thy noble breaſt.
Then (Saint Anzias) I beſeech thee deigne
To my poore prayers attentiue eares to lend:
Thou glorious Saint vouchſafe (I begg againe)
To guard my ſoule from death, and to defend
My body eke [while here on Earth I breath)
From enuious Sathan, For to al mankind,
That when I ſhal to Chriſt my ſoule bequeath,
My Body may repoſe in Hope; To find.
Thee my Conductour at the latter day
Vvho lead'ſt an Army in the Martial plaine,
Inuited by King Robert, to diſplay
Thy banner 'gainſt the enemy. Thou daigne
To be my ſoule's Directour, and procure
That I may follow, and with thee aſcend
Vnto that glorious manſion, where endure
Such ioyes as are, and ſhal be without end.

He was cannonized by Pope Vrban the fift in the firſt yeare of his Papacy, in the Church of S. Didyer in Auignon, & the feſtiual was appointed on the twenty ſeauenth daye of September, which is particularly performed with great ſolemnity in the Conuent of the Reuerent Fathers of the Order of S. *Francis* of *Apt*, where the noble relique of his body lieth, adorned as is fit, and ſo much eſteemed & honoured as to ſuch a ſaint appertaineth, and as thoſe venerable Fathers can or may render, condignely reuecing ſo bright a ſun of their Order, & ſo true a Phenix of *Prouence*.

What is the Cauſe, why S. Elzear, & ſo many great men, became of the third Order of S. Francis, and what this third Order is.

CHAP. XIX.

IN the end of his life it is fit I ſatisfie the *Reader*, who deſires to imitate this great man, the ornament of his Age. Firſt it is a horible, and moſt dreadful ſtroke of Thunder, what IESVS-CHRIST ſayd; *That it was impoßible for a rich man to enter into Paradiſe.* A ſecond is, that which himſelfe aſſureth, that *the evil rich man was damned*, becauſe he was

was rich; ſo that the *Apoſtles* hearing this terrible ſentēce, much affrighted, looked one vpon an other, and ſaied *Alas! who shal then be ſaued, if matters go thus?* Our *Sauiour* replied, that *which was impoßible to men became poßible in God's hands:* True; but what men cannot do, and is reſerued to God alone, is a great miracle; Wel, what is this? Muſt then miracles be daily done, as often as a rich man is to be ſaued? And are they not ſaued but by miracles? Certainly then there would be very few ſaued, & this is it which should ſcartle men, and make them ſeriouſly to looke about them. Verily we cannot tel in what poſture to ſet them, to put them into the waye of Heauen; For to go out of the world, is to kil them, to leaue them in the world floating in delights and walking among precipices, is it not to damne them? They take the contrary way to heauen; The reaſons of the world

world are the Antipodes, and direct Oppoſites to that which *Ieſus-Chriſt* would haue, to wit, Pouerty, Humility, Chaſtity, auſterity of life, and a thouſand ſufferings. The glorious S. *Francis* by diuine inſpiration eſtabliſhed in his life time three ſorts of perſons who followed his Rule; The Religious who liued vnder him; The Virgins of S. *Clare*; and in the yeare 1221. a congregation of *Tertiaries*, who being ſeculars made a third Order, and endeuoured what they could to imitate the habit, the ſanctity, and the vertues of the other; From thence proceeded the *Fathers* of the third Order, Religious profeſſed, & Penitents, called in *Fraunce*, the *Friars of Penitence*, twenty Popes haue authorized & fauoured thē with ample priuiledges, giuing them the cōmunication of fauours graunted to other Religious of the ſame Order, & very lately *Paul the fift* of happy memory

mory, gaue them an Apoſtolical *Breue* very aduantagious in the yeare 1613. imitating therein *Nicolas the fourth*, who was of the Order of Saint *Franck*. The Seculars, who are receiued into the third Order are examined by the Prouincial, they make a certaine oblation in the imitation of Religious. They weare the habit of S. *Francis* vnder their ſecular garments; They haue a litle rule, which doth not bind them vnder paine of ſinne, but ſweetly exciteth them to perfection, and leadeth them (as it were) by the hand into heauen; They haue great Indulgẽcies, they participate in the prayers & penances of the others; laſtly gaine Paradiſe at an eaſie rate, and almoſt at others charge. There was a time when al the world would be of it, and the fire of heauen was in it; I thinke it not amiſſe to afford you here a Table of it, and to ſet downe the greateſt perſonages

nages, who haue been of it, and haue wonne heauen by this Habit. S. *Lucius* was the firſt to whom *S. Francis* gaue this Habit, he led a moſt holie life. S. *Lewis* King of *Fraunce* was of this golden number. S. *Elizabeth* daughter of the King of *Hungarie*; S. *Henry* King of *Dacia*: The bleſſed *Robert* Prince of *Rimini*, S. *Yues* the patron of Aduocats; S. *Roch* a glorious Confeſſor; S. *Angellina* of *Foligni*; S. *Clare* of *Monte Fiaſcone*; S. *Ioane of the Croſſe*; & for a laſt bit; I haue reſerued Count *Elzear*, whoſe life I haue ſet before you; but beſids theſe *Saints*, there is a world of Popes, Emperours, Empreſſes, Kings, Queenes: Princes, Lords, Princeſſes, Prelats, men of al qualities, who haue ſought to climbe vp to heauen by the Ladder of Penance. How manie times *Elzear*, and the reſt deceiued the wolrd, wearing a rough hayre-cloth vnder ſcarlet to tame

tame the rebellion of the flesh; *Delphina* who knew al the secrets of her husband, bare him companie herein, and was often couered with sharp-haire cloth, which she boasted not. Thinke you the rose of their Virginitie, could haue been so long time preserued, if it had not been armed with these thornes, and clothed in the liuerie of Saints? Thinke you the selfe same Heauen belongs to them, who vanquish their passiõs by most austere pennances, and such as make good cheere, sleep til it be wel in the daie, lodge like Kings, are waited on like litle Gods on earth; and that with one knock of their breasts, al their debts are paied; or that Heauen wil descend to raise them aloft in an instant? They are fooles who entertaine these dotages; The wise do like the blessed *Elzear*; they are in the Court as in an Oratorie, and in an Oratorie as at Court

Court, to wit, Innocẽt euerie where. But you wil ſaie, what meanes wil there be to remaine in the Court, and worldly greatnes, and be ſaued, ſince it is almoſt impoſſible ? I anſwere with asking you, when a houſe is infected with the plague, what meanes is there to be ſafe ? One of two, for either you muſt flie quickly far off, and neuer, (if it may be) come thither againe, or to applie one or two Cauteries, and make vſe of good preſeruatiues, not to take in the contagious breath of the infected, and to haue perpetually vpon your heart ſome powerfull remedie to driue the venome of the plague thence, and keep the heart cleane. I ſaie the like vnto you of Court-greatnes; The moſt ſoveraigne remedie is to flie ſo farr from it, that you and the Court may neuer againe meete together ; For to thinke that the Court at anie time

is

is free from the peſtilence of iealouſie, Enuie, ſlaunderers, male-contẽts, miſchieuous, perfidious, traiterous, Tale-tellers, miſtical Cabaliſts, Thieues, Hypocrites, Villaines, intereſſed men, Blaſphemers, men who only ſacrifice to their own good fortune at your charge, who only watch their opportunitie to cut your purſe and throte, if ſo it fal out. To hope (ſaie I) that the Court may be with out theſe euil ſpirits is not to vnderſtand what the Court meanes, for neuer was it, not euer ſhal it be without theſe Hobgoblins, who are the ordinarie diuels, which infeſt Courtiers: If you cannot auoid theſe plagues of vertue, you muſt haue recourſe to the cordial preſeruatiues, which *Elzear*, and his good *Delphina* made vſe of I haue in groſſe ſomewhat nearely expreſſed the euils therein: Acknowledge your diſeaſe, and I wil giue you

the

the receipt: For to reckon them al, would neuer haue an end: For whilſt I declared the old, new would ariſe: They are like peſtiferous mushromes, the oftener pulld vp, the more they grow. Now ſince you are condēned to liue in the Purgatory of wordly greatnes, if you wil liue wel therein, and not be damned in it, do like S. *Elzear.*

1. Thinke that al thoſe who are your freinds, wil quickly be your enemie, and your Enemies wil ſpeedily become your friends ſo ſoone as their intereſt shal giue them cauſe. Speake therefore of them in ſuch ſort, that you may neuer haue cauſe to repēt it.

2. If you imagine that anie Coutier ordinarily loues you but for his own ends, you are a poore man: Al thoſe flatterers, al thoſe Complementers, al theſe people are but ſuch as watch their time to do their own buſines: ſo ſoone as it is done, reſt aſſured they wil

wil ſupplant you, and gladly be the firſt to ſloute you, perharps to perſecute you, and hold this for a Maxime.

3. Whilſt you haue neuer ſo litle credit, al the world wil adore the riſing ſun: ſo ſoone as you bend towards the Weſt, a general Eclipſe followeth, not one wil regard you: Now to thinke you may belong in one poſture, walking on this Ice, theſe precipices, & sharpe pointed Rocks would (verily) be a miracle from heauen, and to become a meere Phenix. God preſerue you in that place, ſince you are there, but if you wil belieue me: Liue as if one day you ſhould leaue it, and perhaps when you leaſt thinke of it.

4. Princes commonly loue no body, becauſe none loue them: ſeruants ſeeke only to get money out of their Maiſters purſes, and Maiſters to exhauſt the vigour of their ſeruants: Al com-

complaine one of an other : The ſeruants ſay their Maiſters are robbers, and the Maiſters crie out their ſeruãts are thieues, and manie times both of them haue reaſon for it ? What should you do ? ſerue your Maiſter, for God would haue it ſo, and it is honourable, beſids your Conſcience bindeth you therevnto, becauſe you eate his bread: God wil ſo handle the matter that in wel ſeruing, you shal be wel eſteemed both by him, & others, but if it otherwiſe happen, at leaſt haue this comfort, that God wil acceptably entertaine your ſeruices, and your Conſcience shal comfort you al the dayes of your life, if anie euil befal you: ſay forthwith I looked to my ſelf, God be praiſed for al : There is no other thing to be expected frõ Courts and men: What? Muſt a new world be created for me, & ſince I am at Court, muſt I not be ſprinkled with Court-

holy

holy water, to wit, with Ingratitude and wrongs

5. If you wil long liue at Court, talke litle, and be patient otherwiſe you ſhal haue a thouſand quarrels, and as manie inconueniencies, laſtly you wil be thruſt out & then you wil be made to vnderſtand what you are, and what you are not: It wel be told you it is you who marr al· that you being out, al miſchiefe is gone, thus behold how you are rewarded for al your paines, with a thorne through your hart al the reſt of your dayes. Naturally Thornes beare roſes, at the Court, Roſes bring forth Thornes; & it is a miracle when any come out of it, with contentment.

6. Neuer belieue anie man (This I aduiſe without exception) when any thing is told you of an other, vntil ſuch-time as you haue heard the other who is accuſed to ſpeake: If he denie it

it, and wel iuſtifie himſelfe, vvhy do you accuſe him? If he confeſſe it, then may you iudge as you pleaſe, otherwiſe you ſhal commit a thouſand errours, and inuolue your ſelfe in labyrinths, from whence you ſhal neuer get out with honour. Yea (Sir) but he is a very wiſe man, and I make much account of him who ſpake it, nay he hath taken execrable oaths vpon it, & wiſhed he might be damned, if it be not found true. Now I muſt tel you, if he wil be damned, I cannot hinder him (Alas!) I wiſh him wel!) but for al this if you do wel, belieue him not, til you haue heard the other partie: The more he proteſteth, the leſſe belieue him. If that which he ſpeakes be true, it with alwayes be true, you ſhal looſe nothing to expect; Furie tranſported him, & made him ſee that he ſaw not, and to take one word for an other; He amplifies the matter, & with his gloſſe

marrs the Text. Haue you euer been deceiued by light beliefe? Belieue, you may be ſo againe; by not belieuing, but weighing your credence you ſhal looſe nothing; by crediting at random you run the haſard to looſe al, and to commit a ſinne (perhaps) mortal, if it be in a matter of importance. Courtiers glory to tel lyes to worke their own ends, what know you whither he lye not at this inſtant? It is better to be hard of beliefe, and not eaſily to belieue il, then to belieue it too ſoone. One can neuer erre belieuing good of men abſent, & almoſt not at any time, can a man be free from fault, if he lightly belieue the euil which is ſpoken of another, raſhly, and inconſiderately.

7. The beſt way to liue in Court with contentment, is to entertaine a couragious contempt of a thouſand fopperies which deſerue not to be taken

ken notice of. The leaſt word is ſpoken of you, preſently al enflames you. Fie vpon it. The pooreſt ſuſpition that comes into your fancie, makes you deſpaire, and dreame daie and night on reuenge; Brutiſh man! If one a litle nod at you, or looke ſomewhat coldly, your heart cracks! O groſſe follie! Tye you then your contentments with ſo ſlender a Thread, that a thing of nothing breakes it, and teares it a ſunder? Is this to liue, or rather to languiſh in Purgatory? Contempt is the higheſt point of Courage; you wil make them mad, when they shal ſee you vouchſafe not to anſwere them, ſo much as one word, as vnworthy of your anger: Rouze vp your ſelfe and throw al this behind you: But is your heart ſo feeble, ſo weake that the leaſt thing in the world makes is beate, and boile with choller! They mock you, mock you their mockerie,

kerie, and they wil burſt with furie; They ſpeake il of you, ſpeake wel of them, you wil make them deſpaire; They wish you il, pray to God for them; That, wil crack their hearts, & in ſpite of their teeth wil make them come to you, & kiſſe the hand, which being able to ſtrangle them, hath done them more good then they al their life time deſerued.

8. If you would not damne your ſelfe among theſe greatneſſes, imitat *Elzear*, performe your holie retirements in the night, employ one part of it in ſpeaking to God, and diſcourſing with Angels, and to make your ſelfe knowne to the Court of heauen: Neuer go to bed vntil you haue read a leafe of ſome good booke, vntil you hartily haue asked forgiuenes of God, and haue entertained ſome good thought in your heart, that you may ſleep vpon it, and by this holie charme

may

may take away al the diſturbances which you haue heaped vp together in your mind al the whole daie, by hearing a thouſand diſordered diſcourſes, and ſeing a thouſand things litle conſonant to a man who hath a wel tempred ſoule. Euerie morning offer vp to God the paines you shal ſuffer among companie, and put your heart into the hands of your good Angel, beſeeching him to ſerue as a Sentinel to you, and perpetually to inſpire you with ſome good thought.

9. If you be ouertaken in Companie, and that by il hap ſome irregular word eſcape you, that a litle fire enflame your heart, and thruſt out ſome ſmal inpatience; ſome Threate, or lilte reuenge: If you haue murmured againſt anie one, ſuffering your ſelfe to be tranſported with the torrent of ſome importunat Tatler, Or els with the current of Common bruit

ſpred

ſpred through the Cittie; If ſome oath or lie haue paſſed by the tongue without the knowledge of the heart, or its commaund, ſweetly ſaie within your ſelfe, that no liuing man may perceiue it. Alas! Good God, I beg pardon! O God let me not fal ſo miſerably. Secretly ſtrike your breaſt, Caſt a ſweet glaunce towards heauen; or ſome picture, and ſay piouſly. O how miſerable am I: who do nothing els but inceſſantly offend my God, who perpetually doth ſo much good for me! Haue euer in a readines ſome word of heauen, to make vſe of it, to renounce euil, and ſtraungle it ſo ſoone as it shal ariſe; God wil bleſſe theſe ſmal endeauours, and wil deliuer you from thoſe paines, and from thoſe ſinns which daily torment, and invade you.

10. Faile not to go to Confeſſion and to receiue the bleſſed Sacrament

as

as often as you may; but do as the moſt bleſſed Elzear, make choice of a ſkilful man, ful of pietie, and aboue al ſuch an one, as hath courage to ſpeake freely to you, and who hopes nothing from you, but your ſaluation. A Confeſſour a litle rough, or at leaſt reſolute, diſintereſſed, & ſagely free, wil bring you to Heauen; Whereas a ſoother, a timerous man, or one who expects ſome benefit from you; wil not haue the fortitude to reprehend your faults, and be the cauſe that you perſiſt, and long time putrifie in them. One of the greateſt miſeries of great men, is, that they go not often enough to the holy Sacrament of confeſſion; and when they do go, it is for ceremonie, or els to ſome one who trembles before them, and who dares nor thruſt the lancet very far into their wounds, to draw the corruption thence, which occaſioneth their death.

II. Nor

11. Nor only *S. Elzear*, but al thoſe who haue liued in Court, among great men, and haue had the happines to be cannonized, or to be honoured as Saints, haue al accuſtomed ſome haire-shirt, or girdle of haire on their bodies, or done ſome other auſteritie, which hath helped to abate the bodies rebellion: for to think you can preſerue deuotion, chaſtitie; good Conſcience, & other vertues without mortification, is foolishly to wrong your ſelfe! Alas, who can be among flames and not burne, or beare fire in his boſome, and not be in danger to be lingeringly conſumed, and vndone.

12. Manie may alleage ſome apparance of reaſon to diſpenſe with themſelues in the foreſaid things: For ſoft and effeminate ſoules tremble with feare, thinking it were to maſſacre the bodie to let it ſuffer neuer ſo litle: but no man liuing can be excuſed to giue

giue at leaſt ſome aliues to the poore, that he may participate in their ſuffe-rings, and ſighes. Few rich men enter into heauen, but through the gate of Almes-giuing, and mercie: *Elzear* often in his heart reuolued the golden Counſel of *Daniel*, who ſaied to the King; (*Sir*) *redeeme your ſinns by the greatnes of your pietie, and by the effuſion of your almes*; He did ſo and found himſelfe perfectly wel.

13. Accuſtome not your ſelfe to haue in your gallery excellent pictures to make a ſhew of them, rather vſe often to looke on them, to deriue ſome profit thence, either by recommending your ſelfe to Saints, by darting forth ſome ſigh of diuine loue, by reuoluing in your mind ſome paſſage of their liues, or in any other manner. Beſids baniſh from your houſes as the plague thoſe wicked pictures ful of abhomination & which wound the chaſt eyes and

and eares of ſuch as viſit you. Antiquity abhorred that Mileſian maide, who ſacrilegiouſly hung in her cloſet, the pictures of IESVS-CHRIST, and of *Abraham*, very neare vnto *Mahomet* and *Homer*. What do in a Catholique houſe ſo many ſtinking, fabulous, and prodigious Diuinities, which ſhoote a thouſand ſorts of impurities into ſoules through the eyes of beholders? vnder colour of adorning a houſe with rare figures, ſoules are disfigured, they being ſtuffed with a thouſand abhominable apprehenſions. *Elzear* cared not to haue at any time in his pallace any picture, which might deſtroy their innocency, who reflected on them.

14. If your houſe be filled with goods of the Church il gotten, & as il poſſeſſed by ſuch as haue no title; reſt aſſured, ſooner or later it wil ruine your houſe, and bring vpon you one after an other ſo many miſeries, that you wil

wil curſe the time of them: But Alas, Perhaps it wil be too late; Theſe kind of goods do like wine, it ſweetly and pleaſingly enters in, but doth in a moment fly to the head, and caſts *Noe* on the groũd, expoſing him to the ſcorne of his own children. A thouſand miſchiefes wil happen to you, yet you being ignorant of the cauſe and going about to queſtion this man, or that man ſhal in the end find, the ſole ſource of al theſe misfortunes, is the goods of the Church, or the wealth of an other, ſhut vp in your coffers.

15. To ſpeake al in a word, I muſt tel you, you muſt do like holy Count *Elzear*, and often reuolue this ſweet prayer in your ſoule; O God of my heart, Alas! ſo vſe the matter, that I may in ſuch manner paſſe through temporal riches, that I looſe not eternal; That the poore moment of a diſaſtrous life, make me not looſe the im-

immortality of that happy life, which is the only true life, repleniſhed with ſolid ioy, and real euerlaſting happines.

The moſt eminent Miracles which God hath done after his death.

CHAP. XX.

IN heauen the greatneſſe of Saints is meaſured by the ſoule of vertue, and ſolid grace; but in the world by the ell of the miracles, and good they do vs. The more ſaints do hide, and eclipſe the luſtre of their perfections: The more God makes then to shine by the ſplẽdor of ſingular miracles: I wil begin with

with a ſtrange one full of many wonders. Paſſing one day through *Geuaudan*, he came to the caſtle called *Griſard* in the dioceſſe of *Mande*; the Lord *Grimoard* a noble Gentleman and his ally, beſought him to take vp his lodging there, and deny him he could not, he ſo hanſomely importuned him; But God had brought him thither, to make vſe of him in a worke wholy miraculous. *Felix* of *Montferrat* wife of this noble mã was brought to bed, and had an euil and moſt shamefull deliuery of it: For in ſtead of a goodly ſonne she brought forth and voyded a deformed and monſtruous lumpe of flesh. The poore mother ſeing this abortiue was ready to dy for grieffe, the women who were about her hauing their harts oppreſſed began to caſt forth lowd cryes, the Father ran thither, al the family was in ſorow, and teares, The noyſe came to the

the holy man's chamber, who touched with iuſt compaſſion, and much pittying his good Hoaſtes, entreated them to bring this indigeſted maſſe of flesh into his chamber; and leaue it there with him alone. Which being done the good ſeruant of *Ieſus-Chriſt* preſently proſtrated himſelfe on the grownd, & lifting vp his eyes towards heauen, and darting his heart into the paternall boſome of God with a filiall confidence, and a moſt ardent zeale, ſayth ſomewhat neare to theſe golden wordes. My God, my Creator, and my good Father, who with a word makeſt, and vnmakeſt al through thy infinit power; I moſt affectionately, & humbly pray thee, thou wouldſt vouchſafe vs thy mercy and that comforting with thy holy grace theſe poore afflicted ones thou wouldſt shape and forme this disfigured flesh, and make it what it ought to be, ordering the members

members, and diſpoſing the pieces of this poore, and innocent creature. He ſpake ſtill, and was not come to the Amen of his holy prayer, when the goodneſſe of God anti-dating his fauours, did in an inſtant do a miracle, and out of this rude lumpe of flesh formed a goodly child, which, according to the cuſtome of others began to cry, and ſalute life by its teares, The Father, and kindred who ſtood at the watch, heard this infantine cry, and ſurpriſed iaſh vnſpeakeable comfort flew al togeather into the chamber, and ouerioyed, haſten to take the litle Babe, truely miraculous. But that which is very remarkeable, is, that the ſaint tooke no heed of the cryes of the Infant, but was ſo tranſported in the feruor of his prayer, and abſorpt in God, that he ſtill perſeuered therein. This lowd noyce made him come to himſelfe, So that amorouſly ſighing

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he ſayth: God forgiue you; Alas why ſuffered you me not in peace to finiſh thoſe few prayers I had begun? After ſome faire excuſes, and pardon aſked, they entreated him to aſcribe it to the ſuperaboundance of the vnexpected comfort of the parents: beſids, that ſince the miracle was done, it was not neceſſary to pray and longer: the Coũt was ſo good, that he eaſily was ſatisfied and told them, he ardently beſought them to giue thanks to this infinit goodneſſe, which had vouchſafed ſo do them ſuch a fauour, which was done, and preſently after he would haue the child to be baptized, & honoured with the name of *S. William*, ſaying afterward to the parents in ſecret: In the name of God haue a great care of this child, breed it vp in vertue, & throughly inſtruct it in good manners, and make it ſtudy hard, for whatſoeuer it is now, it is one day to be the greateſt, and

and prime man of al Chriſtendome. Thoſe worthy Gentlemen of Geuaudan did not conceyue he meant to foretell, but ſuppoſed rather, that out of ciuil courteſy he wiſhd he might one day be a great man. But the trueth is it was an oracle, and was as much as to ſay, he ſhould one day be Pope; verily, you quickly ſhal ſee him ſitting in *S. Peters* chayre, nay which is more, it shal be he, who shal cãnonize *S. Elzear* and shal wel requite him. This Infant bred, and ſet forward to ſtudyes, became Abbot of *S. Victor* of *Marſeilles*, purchaſed a very great reputation, and perfumed al thoſe partes of *Prouence* with the odour of his life. Now, he one day going for deuotion to viſit *S. Baulme*, to honour *S. Mary Magdalen* in that Cauerne, which was to her a terreſtrial Paradiſe; The good Abbot was amazed to ſe a braue gallant to come towards him, running with full

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ſpeed directly to him mounted on a goodly milke white Courſer : at the firſt it affrighted him, and it afterward redoubled vpon him, when he ſaw this noble Gentleman to glitter with ſuch bright ſplendour. Feare not then (ſaith *Elzear*) no, no, Feare not (oh my deareſt) I am *Elzear* your good Ghoſip, who by the expreſſe commandment of God, come to aduiſe you to go with al ſpeed to *Auignon*, his diuine Prouidence hath diſpoſed of you, and wil haue you to gouerne his Church, do it worthily, & ſerue wel ſo good a Maiſter. Inſtantly it vaniſhed, and left the good Abbot in frightful imaginations much aſtoniſhed, pondering within himſelf whither he ſhould go, or not, whither it were not ſome illuſion, or whither Sathan (perhaps) were not trãsformed into an Angel of light. Howſoeuer he performed his deuotion, recommended himſelfe to holy Magdalen

Magdalen, and at al aduenture went to Auignō to ſee what in the end would become of this ſo ſtrange a viſion. The good Abbot comming into Auignon boaſted not at al, nor ſpake one word of the prophecy of the Knight of heauen: Meane while Pope *Innocent* the ſixt dyed about the yeare 1362. The Cardinals after the laſt obſequies done to his Holyneſſe aſſembled together to the number of twenty, but could neuer accord, It often happeneth in Conclaues, conferrers of honours aggree not alwaies together in the choyce of a Pope, becauſe God wil do it by his owne hand, and thoſe who leaſt thinke of it; are many times ſuch as the holy Ghoſt wil make choyce of, and doth inſtal in this ſupreme throne of *S. Peter*. In the midſt of this conteſtation among the Cardinals, a voyce was heard (I know not how) which ſayd. Let vs make

the Abbot of *Marſeilles*, this holy and learned man, whoſe life is in ſuch eſtimation, no ſooner, was it ſpoken, but done; behold him choſen, and ſought out with much magnificence; the good man was much amazed, and would haue beene much more, had it not beene for the viſion. He then is ſeated in the throne, crowned and annoynted on the ſixt of Nouember, & was called *Vrban* the fift. The moſt Chriſtian King of *Fraunce* went to viſit him, and was Pontifically and Royally entertayned. The good Pope preached before his Maieſty, and concluded on a voyage beyond the ſea, & the King was made Chieffe general of the Army. He did much good during the time of his Papacy, at which the deuil was enraged, and rayſed a miſchieuous Iudas who poyſoned the Vicar of *Ieſus-Chriſt*; He was bewayled as a Saint, He was caryed to S. *Victor*

of

of *Marſeilles*, where God declared the glory of his ſoule, by the great miracles were done at his Tombe. See heer the fruits of the garden of the holy Count, and the effects of a Simple prayer which made at once, a man, a Pope and a Saint: after his death he cured many other monſtruous, and miſhapen children, he healed diuers defectiue of their members, infirme in their bodyes, and paralitiques: as the miſerable *Hugh Repert*, who had for ten yeares together been layd in his bed, as a liuing dead man, and who could not ſo much as ſtirre his hand to his mouth: poore *Bertrand* who had ſeauē yeares moſt cruelly been pulled in pieces with the goute, was reſtored to his ſtrength, and began ſtoutly to walke. What ſhal I tel you of the dead he rayſed? It is held a great matter that S. *Martin* rayſed three dead men: He who can reſtore one into eſſence,

may

may wel rayſe ten thouſand, it coſting God nought at al. Howſoeuer, there are but three mentioned to be rayſed by S. *Martin*, and S. *Elzear* eyght at leaſt are numbred: And in what ranke put you the poore *Burger* of *Auignon* who being extremely thronged on the bridge when they caryed the bleſſed Body of the holy Coũt, where whither he were forced either to leape hedlong downe, that he might not be ſtifled in the preſſe, or that heedleſſly he ſuffered himſelfe to fal into the impetuous current of the Rhoſne, breiffly he fel at which time God inſpired him, and deſpaire gaue him hope, ſo that he cryed out as he was falling, Alas, If thou be a holy Body, in the name of God ſuffer me not to dy without Confeſſion. Meane while al men recommended him to God, vndoubtedly belieuing he was cruſhed in pieces, and euery one thruſt forward in the thrõg, thinking

thinking onely of themſelues. How good is God? He heard the poore man, and made him come to the ſhore, and al the world amazed to behold ſuch a miracle, began to cry out, O miracle; whither that the Rhoſne, which runneth with a precipitat violence did open, as ſayth the Hiſtory, and receiued this poore halfe dead creature in its boſome on the ſand, or that he floated on the waues, and were caryed to the ſhore, not by the ſtreame of the water, which glideth directly along like an arrow, but by the current of the diuine Prouidence, in the end he eſcaped, & it was an euident miracle. What wil you ſay of the vnfortunat *Beatrice* of *Apt*, who was ſtrooken by a furious blow with a ſtone, and being in an inſtant knocked downe, was dying in the place, whereof there were more then twenty fiue witneſſes: A good woman moued with pitty ſayd,

Ah!

Ah! Count *Elzear*, Ah, holy Saint, ſuffer not this poore creature ſo to be loſt, without ſpeaking one word to her Confeſſor, If it pleaſe thee to reſtore her to life, I vow to almighty God, and thee, that she shall thanke thee at thy holy tombe, and acknowledge ſhe holds her caytiue life from God, and thee alone. This Simplicity pierced the heauens, and arriued at God, ſo wel that in the ſame inſtant the poore dead woman roſe vp againe, and which (truely) is ſtraunge the place of the mortal woũd appeared as faire, and whole, as if she had neuer beene ſtrooken with the murdrous, & cruel ſtone. The fal of this poore woman brings into my memory thoſe which fell of the falling ſickneſſe, who hauing had recourſe to this man of God were throughly cured, A man ſo humble as he, and who neuer had fallen with the ſickneſſe of vanity, and

fond

fond ambition, wel deſerued to be able to heale ſuch as were tormented with the falling ſickneſſe & when they leaſt thought, were vexed with it. Of al the deafe dumbe, and blind I wil repreſent vnto you but one, who for her natiue goodneſſe deſerueth to be memorized to poſterity. Iſnarde of Rotagne, of a Caſtle neare vnto Apt, had beene ful ten yeares blind. She had often heard, that this great ſeruãt of God had done many fauours to diuers afflicted people: She felt her ſelfe toutched with a deſire to haue recourſe to him, and wiſhed as young *Toby* once againe to ſee heauen before ſhe dyed. I ſhal plainly let you behold the douelike candours of this oppreſſed heart, and ſee the ſimple plaineſſe of her ſoule in her innocent prayer. O my Lord S. *Aulzias* ſaid she, although I be a wretched ſinner, & not worthy to be heard by God, Ay me, nor able to pray to him

him as I ought : Ah, be you pleaſed to beſeech him to reſtore me my ſight, I am not importunat, I aske but one onely of my eyes, that wil make me happy enough. I vow to viſit your holy body, and to thanke you, if God do me this fauour. Verily the good Count did not reiect this holy ſimplicity, but inſtantly reſtored her, her two eyes, and perfectly comforted her. The like he did to many others, and to ſuch as were afflicted with feauers, fiſtulaes & a thouſand other diſeaſes, yea lunatiques, & poore people diſtraught, who had their wits turned topſy-turvey, were ſenſeleſſe, and liued like beaſtes; yea priſoners calling on his name felt either freedome from their fetters or comfort in their dolours, & ſad captiuity. The good he did is infinit, yea in the violence of ſtormes, and enraged tempeſts, being heartily inuoked, this moſt bright Sun of Prouence hath alwayes

wayes helpe ſuch as had recourſe to God by his mediation. Let vs not then wonder if thoſe of the Ile of the County of *Auignon* hauing receiued the holy body at the time it vvent out of *Auignon*, did al they could in the vvorld to keepe him in their boſome, & Citty. For my part I cannot blame them. For would you not that a Citty ſo Catholique should deſire a holy-man, who is the miracle of men, and the Phenix of the world? Eſpecially when they heard how in *Auignon* the bels rangs of themſelues, & of diuers miracles done at the arriual of this holy Relique, and that the whole Citty was in triũph. Now the bearers of the body and the Cittizens of the Iland were twenty fowre howers in conteſtation; what alleaged they not on the one, and the other ſide? A thouſand reaſons, a thouſand diſcourſes, menaces vpon menaces, what did they not?

In

In concluſion euery one is a Maiſter in his owne houſe, and the ſtrongeſt euer hath reaſon on his ſide, and the weakeſt wrōg. Willing, nilling, needs muſt the deſolate bearers retyre to the Inne, hauing their hearts transfixed, and ſeing the earth excerciſed ſo great iniuſtice, they had recourſe to God, & appealing as for a an abuſe, did addreſſe themſelues to the Iuſtice of heauen, begging freedome from ſo vniuſt a ſeyzure. They of the Iland did nothing but laugh at it, and were reſolued to let them lament their fil, and cry til they were weary.

God prouided for them and righted the appellants, putting them in poſſeſſion of their treaſure, but by a notable miracle. In the night theſe poore people ſurcharged rather with grieffe then ſleepe lay in great agonyes; Behold a ſecret voyce, which ſeuerally ſayd to them all: children take courage

rage, to morow early in the morning keepe on your way, & no longer trouble your ſelues nor diſpute with theſe inhabitants, who ſinne rather through zeale then malice, you in the way shal find the body you cary to *Apt*, & shal be comforted. At their vp riſing euery one reuolued in his mind, what he had heard in ſleepe, and fearing it was but a dreame, or an illuſion, durſt not diſcouer it: In the end they aſſembled together, they talked together, euery one diſcouered his viſion; The concluſion was, they would obey, and truſt in God. They went with empty hands, and they of the Ile were very glad, thinking that they hauing ſett good gardes about the houſe, nothing would be attempted in their Citty. But ſaints are not to be kept vnder gard for they paſſe through gates, they fly aboue bulwarkes and go through Sentinells without euer being ſeene.

Theſe

Theſe good bearers who were in the feildes, and already wel on their way, were amazed they ſaw nothing, and were on the point to repent themſelues they ſo eaſily had giuen credit: but behold at the inſtant they ſaw before them the chariot and cheſt wherein the holy Saint was, and we muſt belieue Angels did that which men deſired to performe. Aske me not whither theſe good men were infinitely comforted or not: Nor aske me not whither thoſe of the Ile were much ashamed, ſeing what they ſaw, or rather what they ſaw not, Alas? what publique deſolation, what lamentations. To make ſatisfaction, and to repayre the fault without a fault, nay rather the ſuperaboundance of their deuotion, they ran after with tortch in hand, and in proceſſion, to accompany to the Citty of *Apt* this good Saint, who had choſen it for his laſt abode

abode. In the beginning the bearers were affrayd, and doubled leaſt vnder colour of deuotion, they might come againe to bereaue them of their good Maiſter. There was heerevpon ſome ſmal ſtrife: but when they perceyued they therein proceeded faithfully, altogether ſingīg the praiſe of God they bare this pretious body, and moſt holy Relique vnto *Apt*. The Hiſtory ſayth, the tortches of thoſe of the Ile waſted not at al in this long voyage howſoeuer, God was pleaſed to shew he was not angry with theſe good ſeruants of the Ile who deſired to retayne this holy body. I haue already told you the good offices, of this good Citty of *Apt*; of the vertuous Religious men of the order of *Saint Fraunciſ*, and the great ſolemnity of the feaſt. The great man the reuerent Father Mairon made the funeral ſermon, and told what he learned from him at his laſt ſickneſſe touching his, and *Delphinas* vir-

ginity. A while after *Peter Marnaſque* a man in that time of great reputation made another ſermon, wherein he ſayd that hauing often heard the generall confeſſions of this ſaint *Elzear* he neuer could obſerue one ſole mortal ſinne, and heere in my iudgment behold a miracle of miracles, to haue beene ſo farre engaged in the world, in the court, in armes, in feaſtes, in reuels yet as a Salamander in flames neuer to be burned. How much is *Prouence* bownd to God, to haue had this holy Count? What a great treaſure haue the holy Fathers of *Saint Frauncis* his order in their boſomes? They who forget a Saint, which hath ſuch power, well deſerue to feele a thouſand and a thousād euils in their life but how happy are ſuch as haue the honour often to viſit theſe holy Reliques, and whoſe good aduocate he vouchſafeth to be in heauen, and protectour on Earth.

The End of S. Elzear life.

THE LIFE OF S. DELPHINA

A VIRGIN, AND VVIFE OF SAINT ELZEAR, Count of Arian.

Her Birth, and happy Education.

CHAP. I.

TO relate the whole life of this holie maried, and incomparable Virgin; it would almoſt ſuffice to tel you she was the deare ſpouſe of *Elzear*; as heretofore the

great *Gregory Nazianzen* ſaied, that to expreſſe al the life of his happie brother-in Law; it, was enough to affirme, he was the husband of *Gorgonia*, the paragon of Women, the Diamond of her time: For in theſe mariages ſacred, and made by the hand of God, we muſt belieue that the hearts being but one, and the minds ſo ſtrongly tied together by the knot of al vertues, who ſeeth one, ſees the other. Which is here ſo much the more true, in that the holie S. *Elzear* confeſſed ingenuouſly at his death, that al his vertue came to him from heauen by the meanes of his deareſt *Delphina* who had ſerued him for a ſecond Angel-guardian; that she firſt of al had inſpired him with doue-like thoughts of marital virginitie, a matter almoſt neuer heard of, to al paſſed Ages, and hardly poſſible. In this Bud are locked vp al the folds of his vertues, and al the

the blessed leaues of this rose, of the Virgins of her time. Fully to display them I wil tel you, she was born in *Prouence* in the yeare 1284. or there-abouts (for it is not precisely known) and was the daughter of a noble Gentleman named Monsieur *Guillaume de Cité*, and Dame *Delphina* de *Puy-michel*: Now to saie the truth she was rather the daughter of vertue and deuotion, then of nature: For sister *Cicely* of *Puget*, a religious woman of eminent vertue, and sister of the saied *Ladie*; seing her with child, disposed her selfe to beg of almightie God, that her Sister might happily be deliuered, her fruit baptized, and wholy consecrated to the glory of his seruice. For this purpose, she euerie Euening saied the Symbole of S. *Athanasius*: *Quicunque vult saluus esse.* She so wel, and piously behaued her selfe therein, that she was fully heard.

Her Sister then most happily brought forth a litle virgin on Earth, and a great Saint for heauen, to whom was giuen the mothers name on the font of Baptisme. At the age of seauen yeares, she was an Orphan, loosing both her father and mother. By this death she through the infinit goodnes of God, gained life. This litle Creature was put into the hands of her Aunt sister *Cicely*, that she might be a mother vnto her, and on the Table of this Infantine innocent, draw the first lineaments of al vertue: which she did with so good succesſe, that she surmounted al hope; she distilled the manna of deuotion into the affections of her heart, and powred forth the wholesome liquour of piety. The better thereon to engraue the loue of virginitie she almost spake not of anie thing, but of the life *S. Catharine*, a Princesse; yea the Phenix of Princes-

ſes

ſes, ſaying the crowne of lillies which virginitie had ſet on her head, was much more rich, then, that, of gold and diamonds, which Regal maieſtie might haue crowned her withal, had ſhe been maried. She in her ſweet retirements told her the ſtorie of the life of *Saint Alexius*, a husband, & a Virgin, the puritie of S. *Cicelie* and *Valerian* her husband, two moſt chaſt doues. The eminent beautie of S. *Agnes*, a virgin of thirteene yeares of age, who choſe rather to die, then to looſe one ſingle leafe of the roſe of her virginal Integritie; Laſtly al the Virgins with the puritie of their chaſtitie were the ſubiects of their amorous diſcourſes. It is ſaied the Hares of the Alpes, who ſee not, nor liue not in winter on anie thing but ſnow, become as white as ſnow. This tender maide neither hearing nor ſeing ought but the Angelical whitenes of ſo manie beautiful

tiful Virgins, conceiued such a liuely affection towards this most sacred puritie, that you shal presently behold her bright, as an Archangel. Encreasing in age she encreased in vertue; taking no delight but to read good books, to speake often of God, to frequent the Church, and practise heauenly excercizes. Good God, that they who haue these young spirits in their hands as primed Tables, what wrong they do if they thereon paint not some good thing! vpon the first breeding and vertuous Education depends almost al the good or euil of anie one. So soone as this innocent creature began to appeare, and grow towards ten or eleuē yeares of age, behold a world of young suitors sought to besiege her, some inuited by the powerful attractiues of an innocent and Angelical beautie; others through the lustre of the gold and great fortunes she possessed

ſed, or enheritances, which reflected on her; the moſt diſcreet for her rare vertue, and nobilitie of bloud: But theſe ſollicitations were inſupportable to her; theſe offers of ſeruices, were blowes with a ſtone, or haile which ſtrooke her. To talke to her of mariage, was to ſpeake of Martirdome. Death, and a husband, were al one with her. This innocent doue made no more account of al ſuch ſoothing Court-ships, then as of Rauens and Cormorants, which loue nothing but Carrion, and delight not in it but to teare it in pieces. She entreated her Aunt to rid her of theſe Impoſtours, who pretend to be ſeruants for a moneth, to become tirants the reſt of their life, after they are maried, with ioyned hands she coniured her not to ſuffer her to be ſpoken vnto of mariage, nor that theſe ſuits might diſturbe her; yea she effectually adreſſed her

her ſelfe to God, begging two fauours of him; the one to make her deformed and vnhandſome, that no man in the world might haue one graine of loue in ſtore for her; The other to reduce her to ſuch pouertie, that it might afright thoſe that otherwiſe would peraduenture deſire her in mariage! Alas! how few are to be found in the world, who make ſuch prayers, and who ſo much loue vertue, as not to haue more affection to worldly wealth! She truſted not al this, but deſiring to aſſure the treaſure of her virginitie; she ſealed it with a knot, and an inuiolable ſignet, to wit, with a vow in her heart to preſerue her virginitie al the dayes of her life, and to haue no other ſpouſe but her Sauiour IESVS; vpon which occaſion you shal ſee a great battaile, ſuffered by this poore Creature.

Of her Affiancing.

CHAP. II.

ONE would thinke the world did conſpire the ruine of ſuch as haue neuer ſo litle deſire of doing wel. Scarcely had this Ladie attained twelue yeares of age, but that her Kindred chaunted nothing in her eares but mariage; It was to transfix her heart, to talke thus to her, she employed al her litle Rhetorique to diſſuade them, she ſteeped her reaſons in her teares, she coniured her good Aunt not to forſake her, what did she not to diſſolue theſe deſignes, to what Saint vowed she not her ſelfe for helpe? In theſe

theſe extremities a Gentleman came, ſent expreſly from the King & Queen of *Sicily* who were at *Marſeilles*, commaunding her friends to bring the litle *Delphina* immediately with thē, for they meant to marie her and giue her to young *Elzear* of *Sabran*, ſonne of the *Count* of *Arian*. Her kindred very glad let her know the Kings pleaſure, enioyning her to prepare for it; telling her that in Royal commaunds, there is no vſe of the tongue, but the feet to run, and the hands to act what is by them appointed. Aboundant Teares fel from the eyes of the Virgin, and her cheekes became as pale, as if they had gone about to cut off her head. Sorrow had ſo ſtraightly contracted her heart, and ſtopped her ſpeach, that ſhe in the beginning could not vtter one word but by her eyes, making two liuely fountaines rowle downe her cheekes, which were

the

the firſt torrents of her ſacred Eloquence. Then taking Courage & ſenſe againe, ſhe ſayd with a lowd and confident Tone, that ſhe had giuen her promiſe to IESVS-CHRIST; That ſhe was not to thinke of any other huſband; that ſhe rather made choice of a Tombe then a nuptial bed, that it was to talke to her of death, to tel her of a huſband; That if the earth could not helpe her, ſhe would haue recourſe to heauen, and to her ſpouſe; and that vndoubtedly God would be Maiſter, and ouercome. Take my goods (ſayd ſhe) Take al my Caſtles! Alas! Take al, and leaue me only the treaſure of Virginity, al the reſt I reſigne to you. Ay me! Muſt my eſtate make me looſe the only wealth which my heart deſireth? The riuers of her eyes falling into her mouth drowned the reſt of her diſcourſe, nor could ſhe bring forth any thing but ſighes and ſobs, which

which ruſhed out amaine. Her kindred made no account of al this, aſcribing the denial to a vertuous shamefaſtnes, which euery wel bred Maiden ought to haue, and to a decency neuer to heare ſpeach of mariage, but that a chaſt blush should ſpred ouer al the face. Wel daughter (ſayd they) it is not you wil marie your ſelfe, but it shal be the King of *Sicily*, and we by his commaundment: muſt you not obey Kings, and Guardians? Go to, who hath giuen you leaue, & this bad counſel to make vowes in ſuch minority? At the worſt, the Pope wil diſpenſe with you, and the King hath credit enough to worke it. Vowes il made oblige not, and if this knot too ſtraightly bind your heart, his Holines wil vnlooſe it; and ſet you at liberty? Thinke you we are ſo ſimple, as to ſuffer a potent familie whereof you are the ſole Enheritrix to be ruined,

for

for the ſillie phantaſies, which ſome Mõke may haue put into your braine? And ſince we propoſe nothing but affiancies, you shal haue time afterward to conſider at leyſure, whither you wil proceed to mariage? we wil not to an il end enforce you. Time wil let you ſee, we do nothing herein, but for your good. But verily we are meere beaſts to ſtand here in diſputation with a girdle of twelue yeares of age hauing the expreſſe commaund of Kings, to do what they enioyne. Know you (Damſel) what the matter is, (marry) that you muſt go thither, and not ſtand here at a gaze any longer, Do it confidently, Truſſe vp your trinkets, you muſt be gone to morow.

The poore creature hauing receiued this ſtab of a dagger in the midſt of her heart retired into her cloſet, & powring forth a deluge of ſcalding teares, she had recourſe to the holie

Mother

Mother of God, and in ſubſtance ſaied (Ladie Alas and) my deare Miſtreſſe, and after God the whole loue of my ſoule, I here caſt my poore transfyxed heart at thy feet; Suffer not thy poore ſeruant, who hath had the honour to vow her Chaſtity to God to become the ſpouſe of thy deare ſonne, to be at this preſent reſigned ouer to an other.

What a heart-breaking would it be to me, Alas! what a cruel Heart-breaking to ſee my ſelfe ſnatched out of the diuine hands of thy moſt precious ſonne, to be maried to an other. I had rather die, yea die a thouſand deaths, then to behold my ſelfe drenched in this ſad mishap. But I am not ſtrong enough? O God! what can a ſillie maide of twelue yeares do againſt Kings and Princes, againſt her Kindred, and guardians, yea againſt al the world, bandied againſt me a caytiue creature? Gracious Queene of Angels take

take my cauſe in hand, for next after God I haue put al my hopes in thy goodnes.

Theſe words were waited on with a ſhower of teares, which drew pittie from heauen. I know not whither it were a viſion, or a holie imagination figured in her ſoule or rather a ſecret inſpiration, which God ſent her; Howſoeuer she heard as it were a voice from heauen, which ſpake theſe acceptable words vnto her Daughter) take Courage, my ſonne, and I wil neuer forſake thee: Too wel do wel loue the chaſt, to let them be ouercome.

Thou and I, are ſtrong enough to breake a-ſunder the obſtacles, with which they would endeauour to afflict the innocency of thy deſires. Verily thou shalt be victorious, what euer men may do, and reſt thou vpon my word, and the power of my ſonne: This fauour from heauen calmed the

ſtorme

ſtorme raiſed in *Delphinas* heart, when preſently behold her with a cheereful and confident countenance quite chaunged, and free from al penſiue-nes. Her Kindred came to vrge her afresh, and to giue the laſt aſſay: ſince you giue me time (ſaied she) for mariage, and ſpeake of nothing but betrothing, I wil obey you, and withal hope that God, their Maieſties, and both you, and I, shal be wel content. Which was no ſooner ſaied but she was ſent to *Marſeilles* where she was receiued by their Maieſties and the whole Court, with much honour. The Ceremonie, was ſolemnly performed although (in truth) the holie Maide in her heart would as willingly nay ſooner rather haue ſet her foote into her Beere, then her hand into the hand of young *Elzear*. Yet thus theſe things paſſed, and she was caried vnto *Auignon* with al the Court, where an accident

tident befel, which much thoubled her. A certaine frier named *Phillip de Riez* who had often talked to her of the Vow of Chaſtitie, knowing what had happened, ſought her out, reſolued to ſpeake very ſtoutly to her, and with ſome heate of anger, which the good man termed holie *zeale*. He drew her aſide, and with a wrinkled brow, with an eye fierce enough, and a lowd voice; How (ſaieth he) how Daughter, haue you been ſo il aduiſed to commit ſo groſſe an error, as you are now about? Haue you not promiſed to God, and to me, that you would preſerue your Virginitie, and neuer marie? What wil you make a ſcruple of, ſince you ſo violate the oath you haue made to God? Thinke you God wil ſo let the wrong to paſſe vnpuniſhed which you haue done him by breaking the Vow you made him? As for me I wil free my ſelfe & charge your

conſcience with it, not doubting but God wil aueng the wrong you haue done him. Verily it was to much purpoſe I tooke ſo much paine to inſtruct you in pietie, ſince one breath ouerthrowes al, I with ſo much ſollicitude, and ſo manie teares, performed. Thus brake he off his diſcourſe very harshly, and halfe in choller thence departed. The poore Virgin felt her heart ſo oppreſſed, that she at the ſame inſtant could not ſpeake one word; al her refuge was to betake her to her eies, and shut her ſelfe vp in her cloſed, with a mind ſo perplexed, that wel she knew not on what to reſolue. Her gentlewomen immediately followed her, and hauing vnderſtood the paſſages of the ſtorie, sharply chid the bleſſed father who through ſo much indiſcretion had wounded the heart of the poore Virgin. Al of them together began to talke, to frame a

thouſand

thousand discourses, and to load him with a thousand reproaches not giuing him the leasure of a replie. The conclusion was, he should quickly be packing with al his scruples, and not be so bold as to returne to the Court vnles he were sent for, otherwise his Reuerēce should be talked with; They made him get out; and hastily thence depart. Then they bent themselues to comfort the Virgin, and mock at the frier, deriding him, and his countenance, and framing a thousand iests vpon it, that their litle Mistresse might turne al into a merriment; For that is the Court fashion to convert the maiestie of al vertues into Laughter. But the thorne she bare in her heart could not so by sottish scoffs, be pulled out; Some few daies after she met this good frier, and mildly saied to him? Good father feare not, I am more then euer in my first resolution;

Only pray for me, and you shal see, I wil rather die then euer fal short with God, and my promise; but take heed I beseech you of making anie shew of it. This vnexpected mildnes drew teares from the old mans eies, who paternally loued her, and now praied her to take courage, and wholy resigne her selfe to the holy Prouidence of heauen. The Ladies who saw this secret whispering, and who tooke no pleasure therein, drew neare, and brake off this cõference; giuing some sharp reprehension to the good father, who nothing regarded their peeuishnes, so he might fortifie the courage of the spouse of *Iesus-Christ*; and do her this notable seruice. Which he did, as you shal presently see, and that very prosperously, but after a sharp battaile, as you shal now behold. The hearts of Gods seruants are as Anviles, perpetually hammered, liuing only on blowes and iniuries.

Of her virginal Mariage, and Angelical diſcourſe.

CHAP. III.

THIS happy *Maide* ſpēt three yeares in al ſorts of holy Excercizes of piety; a matter ſo much the more rare, as she was in the Court-Climate, where vertues are commonly very infirme and fraile. In this torrid Zone, luſt walkes in Triumph, and leads poore Vertue in chaines, to ſerue as matter of mirth vnto Courtiers. This noble *Lady* knew ſo wel how to ſpend her time, that the Court was as a Cloiſter to her, hauing her howers of

of meditation, of Examen of conſcience; To read the liues of holy Virgins, of Confeſſion, Communion, and other ſuch like pious employments.

At the age of about fifteene yeares, it was concluded to proceed, and marie them. Aſke not whither the chaſt Doue were ſtraungely afflicted with ſo ſad newes. (*Sirs*) ſayd ſhe, deceiue not your ſelues, for I am reſolued rather to dye, then to be maried, I haue eſpouſed IESVS-CHRIST, I wil not, I ought not, I cannot mary any other. The Count of *Arian* cannot want a wife, as for my ſelfe I haue nothing to do with a huſband. I am told mariages are made in heauen; I verily am aſſured mine is made there; and that ſo wel, that you need not hope to make me harken to any other on Earth. It is ſayd the conſent of parties is neceſſary for the validity of mariage: my conſent is then, that I wil neuer giue my

conſent

conſent, nor affoard any hope of it. What conſcience is there in this (I pray) what kind of Diuinity? I am at liberty to mary whom I wil of al the Lords of the King of *Sicilies* Court; and am not permitted to eſpouſe the King of Heauen, & Earth? If any one then can find me a match more aduantagious, or more honourable, I wil inſtantly giue way to it; but if not, what ſenſe is there to forſake God, for man. They wil enforce me to do ſomewhat, which ſhal at leyſure be repented. Do not I wel enough know what is to be done, which is to get me ſo farr off, that they may haue no noiſe nor ſound of me; and can not I chaunge my habit, as ſo many others haue done, by clothing my ſelfe like a young man for a time to deceiue the world, and then ſeeke out a Monaſtery of *S. Clare*, where pitty may be taken of me, and afterward returne into the habit of my

ſexe,

ſexe, to liue religiouſly?

After this ſlight Thunder-clap, the Tempeſt ceaſed, and her heart powred out a deluge of teares through her eies. The King, and al the Court were mazed at, the bruit of this ſpeach, it was thought good to emploie frier *William* of *S. Marcellus*, a man of great reputation, and a bright ſtar in the order of *S. Francis*, he was entreated to diſplaie the ſailes of his Eloquence, and to endeauour to perſwade this tender Maide to obey the King, and al her freinds': He therein emploied his fiue natural ſenſes, and indeed al his Diuinity. (Daughter) ſayd he, I ſuppoſe you vnderſtand Mariage is one of the holy Sacraments of the Church, and yet it ſeemes you abhor it: Vnder colour of vertue take heed you ouerthrow not vertue. Can you make a vow without the adviſe of thoſe who gouerne you? ſome ſlight diſdaines, nay

hay poſſibly ſome dram of melancholy hath truſt this fire into your head, which ſhal perhaps be ſooner quēched then you thinke, and the repentance of it wil be the more violent, by how much the more laſting. Thinke you to find any religious Order, to receiue you contrary to their Maieſties pleaſure who do you the honour to take care of you, ſhould you enter therein-to by any ſecret poſterne, the great gates would be opened to let you out of it, and rather ſhal twenty fathome of wal be throwne downe, to make your paſſage the more eaſy. As for to abide in Court in the ſtate of Virginity, it is a meere folly to thinke on it; In you it would be much raſhnes to hazard your ſelfe, and who would take charge of you vpon this condition? Would you not make a conſcience to tempt God in this manner, by putting the ſnow of your Virginity

nity into the furnace of the Court, not fearing to haue it melted, or chaũged into ardent flames? I wil know the Virgin ſtate is the moſt perfect, but your quality permitteth it not either in a Cloiſter, or the world much leſſe among Court-Coles, where you ſhal & none of thoſe Phenixes (which ſooner or later are not there conſumed to aſhes. If you haue made ſome indiſcreet Vow, we haue Iudgment enough to diſcouer it, and power to abſolue you of it, and rather then faile the King of *Sicily* hath ſufficient credit to procure his Holines to giue diſpenſation. If the Pope ſaie the word, I ſuppoſe you wil obey, otherwiſe you wil plainly ſhew, that al your endeauour is nothing but peeuiſhnes, that I may not pronoũce any thing worſe. Can you thinke me ſuch a beaſt, as to be willing to damne my ſelfe for you, or if I thought I did il, that I would

go

go about to diſſwade you from a matter, which I otherwiſe eſteeme moſt holy? No, Daughter, no, ſuffer not your ſelfe ſo lightly to be tranſported with trivial imaginations, which peraduenture ſome one moſt indiſcreetly hath breathed into you? If that be al I wil anſwere before God for you, and pledge ſoule for ſoule therein. Good God, how aſtoniſhed was the poore *Virgin* to ſee ſuch a man thus to diſcourſe! She thrice ſighed, ſhed aboundant teares, and extremely bluſhed, and then in few words replied. I haue nothing to ſay to you, but that I haue vowed my Virginity to God, I wil liue and die in this ſtate; My ſpouſe is much ſtronger then al of you, & can wel preſerue that which I haue giuen him. Alas! I take it, it were much better for you to exhort me to keepe my promiſe, and preſerue my Virginity, then thus impertinently to preach ma-

riage

riage to me. But it ſhal not be other-wiſe, and in a word be you fully aſſu-red of it. With that ſhe wept, and held her peace.

The holy Ghoſt put a very ſerious thought into the ſoule of this good Father, which was this. (Deare Daugh-ter ſayd he) If I find a way for you to do what you deſire, and likewiſe what your freinds wiſh; vvhich is, to pleaſe God and men, vvould you not be con-tent? Alas, (ſayd ſhe) that vvere to deliuer me frō the Martydome vvh ich ſo ſtrongly tormenteth my heart, but vvhat meanes is there to accord fire, & vvater, and to match heauen vvith earth? *S. Cicely* (replied) had vovved Virginity to God vvho vvel exerciſed the impenetrable coūcels of his eter-nal Prouidence to gaine *Valerian* to Faith, Martyrdome, and heauen, ſo handled the matter that ſhe was a ma-ried wife, and a Virgin al together. It

was

was not without difficulty, but finally she complied and submitted to eternal reasons: She was maried, she was a Virgin, she made a Martyr of a husband, a great Saint of a wicked Pagan, and of one single Maide, a Virgin, a Spouse, a Wife, a Martyr, a mother of Martyrs, a companion of Angels, an Apostle who conuerted Infidels, indeed what did she not? (Madame) imitate that excellent Virgin, God wil serue himselfe of you to make a great Saint of young Count *Elzear*, wil you hinder God from making of Saints? What glory wil it be for you to imitat not only *S. Cicely*, but the holie *Mother* of God also, who being a Virgin espoused S. *Ioseph*, affoarded *Iesus-Christ* to the world, and withal made Virginity fruitful.

Do some-what in imitation of it, Marie *Elzear*, be a Virgin in wedlock; who can tel but that you may

one

one day produce a Saint for Paradise, a companion for Angels, and a bright Sun for the Church, would it not be a noble miracle, that you being a Virgin should bring forth a Saint who should be a Virgin as wel as your selfe, and be your husband, your brother, your sonne in IESVS-CHRIST; husband and Virgin al together? At these words the heart of the beautiful *Delphina* opened, and dilated it selfe! she saying with a smile steeped in an ouerflow of teares. Alas, Good father, how much you comfort me. I wholy render my selfe vp, and truly find that God by your lips effectually speaketh to my heart; I then wholy deliuer my selfe vp to God, and submit to the eternal secrets of his soueraigne, and paternal Prouidence, that anie thing may become of me he shal please. The good father hartily glad, ran to her Kindred; They rauished with ioy

hastned

haſtned to the *Virgin* Elzear; thinking he hat got the victorie flew ſpeedily to the chamber of his deare ſpouſe, the King and Queene were infinitely pleaſed: One would haue thought it had been a Triũph ouer a new world; ſo great was the exultation, that in concluſion, with ſo manie endeauours, the ſpirit of a poore innocent was ouercome, & ſo brought to paſſe, that forſaking the Virgin ſtate, she ſubmitted to the bondage and captiuity of mariage. Behold how the world triumpheth ouer vertue, trampling it vnder foote, making the meaneſt to contemne the greateſt, and then ſtand and laugh at them. Time was not loſt, in an inſtant the Court is filled with Haugh-boyes, with violins, and noiſe; The wedding is celebrated, the feaſts are Royal, a thouſand acclamations of ioy, al ſwam in Hypocras but the heart of *Delphina*, where an impetuous ſtorme

ſtorme aroſe. Feare to be deceiued ſeized on her, and leaſt vnder hope to make her a Virgin and a maried woman, the roſe of Virginitie might be ſnatched from her leauing her nothing but the Thorne of mariage, fixed deepe in her heart. O the goodnes of heauen! How ſtraungly is the life of the vertuous mingled with ſweet and ſowre! When the day was ſpent, and the new maried Couple retired into their chamber; *Delphina* caſt her ſelfe vpon both her knees before Count *Elzear*, powring out two ſtreames of teares, and thruſting forth by heape ſobs vpon ſobs laſtly drew from her much oppreſſed heart theſe fevv vvords, vvhich Virginity dictated in her ſoule (Sir) it hath pleaſed the infinite mercie of my God, to inſpire me with a moſt ardent deſire to preſerue my virginitie; His Goodnes hath ſo liuely toutched me, that vnable

ble any longer to reſiſt the holy Ghoſt, I haue made a vow of perpetual Virginity. It hath been by meere force that I conſented to mariage, but be you aſſured, I wil rather die, then looſe my integrity. I verily am yours by the Sacrament of wedlock, but God's by the vow of chaſtity: I ought not to forſake the great God of heauen for you, Ay me! no, no, although to ſpeake truly next after God I loue nothing ſo much as you. S. *Valerian* & S. *Cicely* haue trod vs out a path al couered with flower de luces, they were maried and Virgins together, liuing like vnto two Angels; It reſts but only in you (my deareſt freind) for vs, to make in our dayes this ſingular miracle of purity to be reviued? I haue been confidently told God would touch your heart by my mouth, and that I therefore ſhould make no difficulty to mary with you, that the band of wedlock ſhould tye

our hearts, not our bodyes, and we as brother & ſiſter ſhould liue together. The Angel guardian of my chaſtity wil neuer endure you to wrong my Maiſter, and deareſt Spouſe; and certainly you run a great hazard of life, if you proue ſo daring as to attempt any thing vpon my perſon, which is ſacred, and vowed to God.

Let vs liue (Deare freind) let vs liue as the Angels aboue in heauen, rather then in the mire of worldly corruption, wherein men whilſt they breath, brutiſhly wallow! O happie *Delphina*, thrice happy to fal into the hands of the chaſt Count *Elzear*! Theſe words were drenched in a huge deluge of flowing teares which fel into her mouth, and on her Virgin boſome. Now when the eyes ſpeake it were a thing ſuperfluous to make the tongue talke, which neuer can deliuer it ſelfe like vnto our eyes. *Elzear* felt his heart trans-

transfixed, and astonished if euer any were, much a doo had he to find his tongue & heart to answere this so infinitely vnexpected demaund, in the end he breathed forth his griefe. Had you (deare freind) a desire to liue a Virgin, you ought not so easily to haue admitted of mariage, & to abuse both me, and my freinds; but since you are maried (me thinkes) you should no longer thinke vpon the preseruation of Virginity. A thing vnheard of through al Ages, is not to be done in ours; To match fire and snow, is a matter aboue the reach of mankind. At one instant you go about to wound the hearts of al my allyes & yours, who shal see before their eyes two flourishing families, dissolued. Was it not enough for you to engage your self vpon this vow of Virginity, without enforcing me vnto it, me, who neuer haue thought of it, but as to liue

very chaſtly. Who hath euer heard this Paradox; To marie, to preſerue Virginity? Thinke you I can make a fourth, & enter into the Ouen with the three innocents, and not feele the feruours of fire which waſteth the ſtrongeſt men? You alleage vnto me I know not what *Valerians* and *Cicelyes* : It is true they are two Phenixes; but do you imagine al birds may hope to be metamorphoſed into Phenixes? ſince they were almoſt as ſoone Martyrs, as maried, and in the bloud of their Martirdomes, they quēched al the fire which might in their life-times haue burnt them. Can we if we liue fifty yeares together hope for this fauour, ſince in the horror of deſerts, amōgſt sharpeſt rocks, the perfecteſt Hermits had buſines enough to preſerue their Virginity? If you would ſay you would go into a Cloiſter, I into a wildernes, there might be ſome apparance of reaſon

son; but to liue together, to see our selues day & night in the strength of youth, to be maried perpetually at Court, in the midst of flames and flashes of sulphur, only children of our families, I challenge the most austere Religious in the world, to vndertake it? Wil you make no conscience in saving your owne Virginitie, to drench me in an Abiffe, wherein I perhaps shal be constrained to precipitate my chastity. Let vs do better, let the Pope dispense with this ill conceiued Vow, or put you into a Monastery, and giue me leaue to marie; Thus shal we get out of this troublesome labarinth. *Delphina* tooke courage, & pursuing her first designe, so handled the matter, that she obtained the first night, which she spent in prayer, and the effusion of teares: *Elzear*, and she had many other discourses, but the great God of heauen gaue so great predomi-

dominance and power to the teares & words of *Delphina* that she got *Elzears* good wil, and she vsed such preualent persuasiues, that he willingly sacrificed al his innocent pleasures to Virginity. God let him see the thornes of mariage, and the immortal lillies of Virgin puritie; he made him to abhor the pollutions of pleasures which how innocent soeuer, are nothing but ordures, shameful, and most sluttish vncleanes. That it is better to be a Companion of Archangels and al the Serephins, then father of three or fowre litle children, who perhaps wil proue wicked vipers, borne to teare their Mothers wombe, and gnaw their fathers heart asunder: That it were much better to haue God for heire then an vngrateful reprobate, and Atheistical sonne, who would no deigne to set so much as a marble Table on his fathers Tombe, for feare of ouer much expence.

pence. Wretched father, of so miserable a sonne! whither then are our Treasures better placed aboue the vault of heauen, or in our Coffers, to be a prey for thieues, and perhaps of Executioners? Wel, they resolued to liue together like two innocent Doues, and as those two Cherubins bound to the Arck, which perpetually looked one vpon an other, and neuer touched each other, and had God betweene them, or els an Angel Vicar general of God. The holy Ghost gaue powerful motiues to *Elzears* heart, and inspirations so efficacious, that he was forced to sel himselfe to God, and resigne himselfe to his holy direction.

of

Of her new affaires, and most bitter contradiction.

CHAP. IIII.

VIRGINAL purities is as an excellent sauour, euerie one who hath it about him presently discouers himselfe, by communicating a fragrancie of odour. How secret soeuer this sacred complot were betweene the new maried couple, it was perceiued. Beetles die by smelling the sweetnes of the rose; Courtiers grow mad when they at Court take into their nostrils a sent of Virginitie, and abiect soules loue nothing but ordure. The Ladie of *Ansois* hearing

ring, it told that the moſt precious delights of theſe young Louers, was to pray al night, and to enter-mix fountaines of teares, very sharply chid the innocent *Delphina*, calling her in bitter ſcorne ſuperſtitious, ſcrupulous, and holie Reformiſt. She appointed her ſeruants ſuborned for the purpoſe, and whom she had inſtructed, inceſſantly to perſecute her with a thouſand ſcoffs, and bitter ieſts; theſe pliant people left her neither daie nor night, perpetually clamouring into her eares, a thouſand impertinencies troubleſome, and il to be diſgeſted; yea euen in the night; they laie in her chamber to obſerue her, and know whither she paſſed it as a maried wife, or like a profeſſed Nun. So that she muſt expect til theſe Harpies were a ſleep, at which time the poore *Virgin* roſe from *Elzear* to praie in quiet. What a torment was this (I pray?)

What

What a hazard! and what holie puritie! In the morning there was great care had to attire and dreſſe her; Theſe loue-bawdes tricked her vp, and her on ſo manie trinkets, that it was a great Croſſe to the innocent *Virgin.* She was not ſuffered to ſay a *Pater noſter* at libertie, she continually had companions appointed, the moſt giddie wantons of the Court, and who afflicted her eares with a thouſand toyes, and Court follies; Theſe sheight Tatlers did nothing but laugh at her penances, and mocked at al her deuotions, talling them Hypocriſies. The Ladie of *Anſois* did much, worſe, for being extremely paſſionate to ſee her ſelfe a grand mother, she ſent for skilful Phiſitians, and cauſed them to appoint *Recipes*, that quickly *Delphina* might be with child. From time to time needs muſt she ſwallow moſt bitter potions, and be let bloud, which

ſhe

she did with great courage, as wel to obey this Ladie, as to couer the secrecie of her vow. There were no dancings, feasts, nor trifling follies whereunto she was not trained out. What a Martyr-dome was it to a chast heart to haue her eares defiled with a thousand impurities, which she must daily heare in Comedies, and entertainmēts of those Court-Ladies. To dance without desire; To laugh against her wil, to eate in spite of her teeth, to be constrainedly, braue, To be on the wheele of honor, detesting in soule al worldly vanities, vnable to do wel but by stealth, to make a shew to take delight in things which wound the heart, are Torments so insupportable, as nothing can be more. She was clothed al in gold, and Embroderie, but vnder this glitter, she put rough Haire-cloth ouer her delicate skin, and wel deceiued the world.

Among

Among companie ſeeming to laugh from the bottome of her heart, ſhe darted towards God amorous ſhafts, and ſhort iaculatorie prayers, which flew directly to the heart of her *Saviour.* When ſhe could ſteale a minute and ſee her ſelfe al alone in a corner; O God it ſeemed to her ſhe was in Paradiſe, ſhe opened her whole heart to heauen, & her eies ouerflowing powred forth torrents of water, and moſt holie teares. In theſe ſo sharp preſſures, wherein her heart was cruelly tormented; ſhe begged on al ſides ſome ſweetnes from Paradiſe, and ſome drop of Manna from heauen.

One daie ſeing a booke on the aulter in expectation of Maſſe, by inſpiration from God, ſhe caſually opened the Miſſal, and hapned on theſe ſweet words of the diuine Apoſtle *S. Paul,* 1. Cor. 10. *Our Lord is faithful, nor wil he ſuffer you euer to be tempted aboue your forces*

forces, but wil perpetually deriue ſtrength out of your weakenes, and cauſe your temptations to bring you much profit, wherefore be couragious. Theſe diuine words deſcended into the depth of her ſoule, and enflamed the very bottome of her heart, but with a fire ſo ſweet, ſo affectionate that the poore *Virgin* thought ſhe ſhould faint with ioy, and fal into a ſwoone. Eight whole daies ſhe reuolued theſe ſacred words in her mind, with ſo delightful a tranſportation of ſoule that this pleaſure of Paradiſe enchaunted al her ſufferings, & made her a litle to taſt the innocent contentment of thoſe diuine torrents wherewith God inebriateth bleſſed ſoules aboue the firmament. The deſire to preſerue her virginitie redoubled in her among her incredible cõforts, and by new oaths ratified her vow, mocking in her heart at al theſe ſottish tricks of the Court, with which foolishly

foolishly they thought amuse her, and to put away her sillie fantasies: For thus at Court do they talke of the most holie vertues.

Herevpon it hapned prosperously for her that the Lord and Lady of *Sausois* departed this life; This their death dried vp the tongues of those Court-bablers, who no longer had the boldnes to assaile the vertuous Counteſſe, wel pleased to see her selfe freed from these captiuities. Being now become a Mistresse, she put her family in excellent Order, and wholy at her pleasure attended to deuotion. That was the time when *Elzear* made his new Decalogue expressed in his life, and that he ordered his house, disposing it into such forme, that it was an Idea of a perfect Oeconomy. She no longer had any in her seruice, but vertuous women, it was not knowne there was any painting, pondering, or vnprofi-

table

table vanities, Court daliances, ſcoffe, ſlaunders, and ſuch like ſcurrilities, wherein moſt Court-Ladies ſpẽd their time. Alas, moſt foolishly! To be in fauour with my Ladie, you muſt be acceptable to God; The moſt vertuous, was the greateſt fauourite in the houſe; There was ſeen no other *Amadis de Gaule*, but the liues of Gallick Saints, and the holie aduentures of holy Perſonages; No ſuperfluous perfumes, but the odour of al vertues; To ſpeake it of an other was accounted blaſphemie; The Gate was beſet with an armie of poore, al who daily had ſomewhat: It was a perfect houſe of peace and of God; and to ſay truly, it was rather a Cloiſter, then a Court of Lords.

About this time the good *Lady*, who had bred her as her daughter, piouſly deceaſed. She appeared to her during theſe great combats, in a reſplendent robe

robe, ſprinkled al ouer with ſtarrs of vnſpeakeable beauty. She told her, God tooke ſingular contentment in her puritie of mind and body; that ſhe came by his expreſſe command to encourage her, giuing her aſſurance that God vndoubtely would make her victorious, that heauen was propitious to her, and that one would not belieue what account God made of ſuch as faithfully ſerued him: In the name of God ſhe aduiſed her to perſeuer in her good purpoſes, and by no meanes relinquiſh them: and ſo ſhe vaniſhed. *Delphina* felt her heart to open and to be replenished with ſuch aboundance of heauēly ſweetnes, that she thought she should die. She was truly obedient to her husband, and honoured him as a Saint. She ſo wel proportioned her time, that she gaue to God his certaine howers, and to houshold occaſions what was fit, without omitting

anie

any thing, wel knowing the deuotions of a maried woman ought to be ordered in a different manner from persons religious, and such as are dedicated to the seruice of God. She vnderstood matters belonging to God are alwayes done in order, and admit of no confusion. That true Contemplation is the sister of Action, & that the good Sisters *Martha* and *Magdalen* must help one an other. That it is a great abuse vnder colour of deuotion to forget houshold occasions, and let al go at random: It is true slothfulnes, and instead of spirituality, a meere vanity, and a fond ambition to thinke that in maner to be wel vnited with God, and greatly to haue proceeded in the exercizes of vertue. That the true note of a wife most obedient to God, is, to be very obedient to a husband, vnles he be some bruitish man, and without any feeling of God, or gui-

dance of reaſon. She who wil know the interior Oeconomy of the ſoule, muſt looke into the Oeconomy of her houſe: when a woman loueth the order of her houſe; decencie, care of her domeſtiques, to haue peace wel obſerued, the feare of God, and vertues alwayes wel entertained, and al to proceed fairely: reſt full aſſured the ſoule is in a very good ſtate, & her deuotion moſt ſolid. Now this appeared in the houshold gouernment of the chaſt *Delphina*: neuer was there anie noiſe heard, no riots, no falſe reports, nor other plagues of families. So ſoone as any thing aroſe in it, as ſoone she haſtned to ſtifle it. She loued her ſeruants, as her children, ſo likewiſe was she honoured as a mother, and as a Saint of Heauen. She in no caſe would endure in her houſe either he, or she-ſeruant, who had committed faults, which were in no ſort to be tolerated or diſſembled

ſembled: betweene her, and her huſband, neuer was quarrel heard, what he loued she alſo affected, and liued together in great tranquilitie, and good correſpondence. The families of Saints are Gods families, and commonly good Maiſters make good ſeruants. Such was that of *Delphina*, for it was a true mirrour of wel ordered houſes, an Idea of a perfect and noble Oeconomy; ſo wel had ſhe ordered her houſe, where al was reſplendent in vertue, & in the ſingular intergrity of life and manners of al her domeſtiques. She was that ſtrong, that chaſt Mother of a family, which neuer could *Salomon* find vpon the face of the Earth.

Of her Viddowhood, and her exercizes of vertue.

CHAP. V.

THEY continued not long in this ſweet ſolitude, for *Elzear* was forced to haſten into *Italy*, to put himſelf into the poſſeſſion of the Countie of *Arian*. *Delphina* was conſtrained to follow him ſoone after. It is ſayd that entering into the ſayd Citty, this melodious voice was heard in the ayr, *Gloria in excelſis Deo, & in terra pax.* It was an Oracle, and a diuine Prophecie: For the Citty being diuided into

into factions, and the greateſt men falling into cold diſtaſts, and irreconciliable enmities, no man could haue told how by the torrent of his Eloquence to quench theſe coales. Could you imagine, that this holie Counteſſe ſhould be ſo bleſſed by heauen; The ſweetnes of her ſimple accẽts but very forcible, ſtrake ſo powerfully into the rocks of thoſe inſenſible, and inflexible hearts, that ſhe tamed them, and rallied vp together theſe Lions & Tigers, which dreamed on nothing but to deuoure one an other; with teares in their eyes they ran mutually to embrace, and happy he, who could be the firſt to aſke forgiuenes of his capital enemy. Al the Citty piouſly aſtoniſhed, began wel to vnderſtand what this diuine voice meant, which came from heauen, and ſayd alowd, that *Fraunce* had not ſent them a Count & a Counteſſe, but a he, and a ſhe-Saint. The

Queen

Queene of *Sicilie* entreated her to be the gouerneſſe of her Daughter the Dutcheſſe of *Calabria*. Verily she was the Angel-guardian of this young Princeſſe, whom she ſo wel inſtructed, that in few dayes she gained heauen. For she deceaſed between her armes, and dyed ſo braue a death, that one would rather haue deſired to dye with her, then to haue bewailed her moſt happy departure. Alas! ſayd ſhe; it is a great mercy of God, when a Princeſſe dyeth in the ſtate of innocency in the midſt of the Court: For liuing long there, doubtles it is almoſt a miracle to be ſaued in it. Can a poore Lamb among ſo many rauenous wolues, hopes any thing, but to be ſwallowed, when leaſt aware of it? In the meane time *Elzear* went to *Paris*, and died there, as we expreſſed in his life; whereof she hauing had a reuelation, shed a deluge of moſt bitter Teares.

The

The Queene came to comfort her, and ſaied nothing vnto her, but that she much wondred to ſee her ſo diſſolued into teares, who in mariage preſerued virginitie, and who vnderſtood the libertie she hereafter should haue to liue contẽtedly among the delights of ſpiritual life; without any reſtraint. Beſides, that her ſpouſe dying ſo holily, it was to ſaie truly to do him wrong to lament ſo good a death. Alas, Madame (ſaied *Delphina*) the honour your maieſtie hath done me much ſweetens my martyrdome, but in the name of God let it not ſeeme ſtraunge, I ſo ſenſibly bewaile the loſſe of a treaſure irrecouerable. The good *Count* (Madame) was the Angel guardian of my virginitie; His life was a mirrour, and a moſt pure Chryſtal glaſſe wherein I daily learned a thouſand ſorts of perfections; His words had ſuch power ouer my heart,

that

that with two words he tooke away al acerbities which enuenomed it, and blew away the clouds, which inuolued my poore ſoule. I enuie not his glorie! Alas; no verily; but I bemoane my owne mishap, I was vnworthie, I confeſſe it, longer to enioy thoſe rare perfections, reſplendent in the ſanctitie of his life. The loſſe hath made me vnderſtand the greatnes of the good I poſſeſſed. The Tye of ſoules is a knot much ſtraigheer then other, and the loue of vertues a thouſand fold ſurpaſſeth the affection of bodies. Other women looſing their husbands, in concluſion looſe nothing but a man, perhaps a Tirant, an Arabian, but I (Alas!) I haue loſt an Angel of heauen. My ſorow (*Madame*) is not a ſorow of impatience, but a teſtimonie of perfect loue, wherefore I thinke that to go about to wipe away my teares were with me a kind of

crime

crime. Whilſt he liued I liued as a Doue, the reſt of my dayes I deſire to ſpend as a chaſt turtle breathing forth my griefes, and ſweetly ſighing in an amorous retirement, and aſpiring to nought but heauen. The Queene mingled teares with hers, and kiſſing her, left her in quiet, eſteeming her moſt fortunate in this diſaſter, and highly commending ſo eminent vertue. Now *Delphina* began to lead a moſt perfect life. She tooke off al her attires and vanities, al that glorious brauerie wherewith Women vſe to ſet out themſelues. Her Habits were ſimple, very modeſt, yet moſt neate. True pouertie, and handſomnes are ſiſter-twinnes, which euer walke hand in hand. Pouertie which is ſluttish, is rather the pouertie of an hoſpital then of religion: She loued the Motto of *S. Francis*; Pouertie; and cleanlyues. Vnder theſe ordinarie garments she hid

hid courſe Haire-cloth, which she ware on her virginal bodie; sharpnes of Haire-cloth is the ſentinel of Chaſtitie. Not content with this cruel auſteritie; she had certaine daies appointed for diſcipline, which was very rough; for it was not a diſcipline of knotted thread, and ſoft whip-cord, but of litle Iron linkes, with which she mortified her poore bodie, and was often al bloudie. Her bed was a ſtraw mattreſſe hard enough, and nothing els, and her bed clothes ſuch as modeſtie, & pouertie did dictate. Her life was not a life, but a long traine of faſts almoſt continual; Her food very litle, and groſſe; Al her good cheere was to feaſt the poore, and to pul morcels out of her own mouth to giue them to the miſerable, and infirme. She more willingly viſited the Hoſpital then the Court; Court perfume made her heart riſe againſt it, and the

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il aire of Hoſpitals, were her moſt delicious ſauours. Good God, how different are the ſenſes of vertue from thoſe of nature! Her howers of prayer were ſo wel proportioned that al therein went in order; vnlimited deuotions or too long, are the deuotions of ſelfeloue, and holy idlenes. Litle, often, good, and welordered, is a note of the deuotion of Saints; Wil you ſee (ſayd she) whither your deuotions be ſolid, and wel grounded or no, obſerue if after you haue wel meditated, you willingly take paines, & hartily ſet a hand to knead the paſt, thruſting it vp to the elbowes in it; Otherwiſe thoſe deuotes who loue nothing but quietnes, to ſit three howers on their knees, and al the daye at Church to driue away diſtractions, or els expect that heauen should fal into their hearts, and to do a miracle by making a Saint of an indiſcreet one; belieue me (ſayd she) theſe

theſe are empty deuotiõs, this is meer drowzynes. What deuotion is it (I pray) where one learneth to do nothing, to become very headſtrong and vainglorious, and vnder colour of eleuated ſpirituality to nourriſh a thouſand moſt groſſe imperfectiõs, ſo much the more daungerous, as the parties ſuppoſe themſelues aduanced towards the moſt eminent perfection.

An Errour, (Alas!) An errour, like to thoſe of cheaters, who ſeing a child hauing a diamond of great value, giue it an apple, or ſome painted glaſſe, and ſnatch the iewel out of its innocent hands. The holie Counteſſe prayed for two, and laboured for fowre. You ſhould haue ſeen her perpetually with worke in hand amongſt her Maides; but one would haue thought fire had been there, ſo ſpeedy they were in their buſines; To ſee her you would haue ſaid ſhe had a deſire to grow rich by

by hard labour, & al her good ſeruants ſtroue to the death who ſhould do beſt, moſt, and ſooneſt, but were otherwiſe al of them ſo merry and contented, that it is not wel to be expreſſed. Al their works were no ſooner done, but cõfiſcated & giuen to the Church, or els to ſome hoſpital, that is to ſay, conſecrated to God. Al this was but the prentiſhip of her perfection? For ſhe draue the point of her vertue much farther. She coniured the King to giue her leaue to ſel al her lãds to giue them to the poore, following the counſel of IESVS-CHRIST and the example of *S. Francis*, whom ſhe tenderly loued. The King was deafe on that eare of ſelling ſo many goodly Lordſhips to buy a wallet; and to pul out of the hands of her allyes ſo faire poſſeſſions, to put al into the power of fowre beggers, and buryal of it in a ſpittle. And who (beloued) wil cheriſh you, when you

you haue loſt al? thus ſayd he? And whē you haue giuen al at a blow, what wil you afterward giue to the poore? Is it not enough to afford the fruit, without aliening the ſoile? Wil you put your heires to the ſcrip, to fil the wallets of beggers, and prodigally powre out al your eſtate to them? Did your auncestours ſweat bloud and water to purchaſe theſe goodly Caſtles to beare them into an hoſpital, and fatten a hearpe of loyterers, whilſt your kindred dye of famine? Do you ſo diſpoile your allyes, and teare out their bowels to glut vnknown varlets? Niece) you muſt gouerne your deuotions, and not maſſacre cōmandments to obſerue Counſels. What ſhal I ſay to your Kindred to comfort them? Shal I conſent to their ruine, to ſee with their ſpoiles, beggers enriched, fit to be ſent to the galleys to get their liuing with ſtrokes of a Buls ſinewes? verily

verily they who breath these superstitions into you, deserue exemplar punishment, & were it not for your sake, I know not what Iustice should not vnpardonably be inflicted vpon them. See there an earthly and worldly discourse behold here a heauenly. *Delphina* wept, and powring forth so manie teares interrupted with such affectionate sighes, spake words so diuine, and enflamed with the loue of God, and holie pouerty, that they were as many shots of arrowes which transfixed the heart of good King *Robert*. This sweet violence constrained him to giue consent, and willing, nilling to admit of her requeſt. The good Counteſſe surprized with vnspeakeable ioy, instantly went about her busines, she solid al, and keeping back very litle, that she might not be chargeable to her Kindred distributed al, and gaue it to the poore. Then she went to confession,

and

and a while after receiued the bleſſed Sacrament; Forthwith in preſence of her wayting gentlewomen, and thoſe of her family, she made a ſolemne vow of perpetual pouertie, al the world diſſoluting into teares, but her ſelfe, who with a cheereful eye, with an Angelical Countenance pronounced al the words of it as if she had gained the Kingdome of heauen, and bought it with ready money, returning to her chamber, taking off her garment, & kneeling before her maides she prayed them for God's ſake, to giue her, a Coate of almes. The poore maides proſtrated themſelues al on the earth, and shed ſo many teares, and made ſo lowd exclamations; that they almoſt fainted. In the end needs muſt they yeild to her, and find out a garment, which was giuen her as almes; she moſt affectionately kiſſed it, and clothed her ſelfe with it, thanking God

God, that she hereafter might weare his liuerie, and be wholy at his seruice. She afterward expresly commanded al her maides that they should not cal her either Madame, or Mistresse, but very plainly the humble seruant of IESVS-CHRIST, & the Hand-maide of the poore.

Of the holie, and sweet conuersation of Delphina.

CHAP. VI.

THERE is nothing so pleasing as the conuersation of Saints, which are true Saints. There is not any thing so holily lightsome, their Countenances perpetual-

ly ſmiling; their hearts ſtil content, their words euer conſonant, & powerful, al their actions as ſo many holie charmes, which happily enchaunt humane hearts. Queene *Sancia* was ſo truly in loue with the ſanctitie of *Delphina*, that she could not liue one daie without her. A thouſand times she craued diſmiſſion, a thouſand times she was denied. Not able then to leaue the Court, she ſought to turne the Court into a ſchoole of vertues. She ſo wel manured the ſpirit of the Queene that she made a ſaint of her; The Ladies of Court had much a doo to forſake the roſe of pleaſures to take the thorne of vertue, but *Delphina* by her conſtancie bare away the victorie. She had a preualent power to imprint the loue of vertue on hearts: Talking of God, ſhe ſpake of him with ſuch predominance, that she perſwaded anie thing she pleaſed. When the heart

and

and eies ſpeake; the heart and eies of the hearer anſwere, and make a diuine Eccho, affording ſighes for ſighes, teares for teares, and flames of diuine loue for the like. When *Delphina* entertained the Queene with ſpiritual things, nothing was ſo much feared as to haue her make an end of her diſcourſe, or that she should cut it off in the midſt, ſo much was she rauished with the ſwetnes of her heauenly diſcourſes. You might haue ſeen al the Ladies tied to the bleſſed lips of the holie *Counteſſe*: You may iudge what she did in rectifying the roial ſoule of the Queene, by that she cauſed her maieſtie to do. For firſt she built and founded manie Churches of religious, hauing no comfort in the world ſo great, as to ſerue the ſeruants of God. Since (ſaied she) I am good for nothing, & that the qualitie of a Queene takes from the roial condition the

power seriously to serue God; Alas! At least, it is fit I help the seruants of God, that I weep by their eyes, I sigh by their hearts, I sing by their sacred mouths and daily offer acceptable sacrifices by their blessed hands to the diuine Maiesty of the great Potentate of the Potentates of the world before whom great Kings are but as sillie butterflies, and wormes of the earth, al naked, most imperfect; and very miserable. She had a heart very tender towards the sick, she employed al her spare money to do almes with it; and much better loued to place her oriental pearle in the hearts, and hungrie bellies of the poore, then on her eares, or about her neck. Shut your eyes (oh Terrestrial soules,) and shut your eares (you curious Women) least your hearts faile you, in hearing and seing what I am about to relate of her heroical, and truly imperial vertues. This

Prin-

Princeſſe had ſo wel ſubdued the rebellion of her body, and mortifyed, her appetites, that the moſt hideouſly infirme, were thoſe she moſt eſteemed. In ſight of the Court she was often beheld to embrace, and kiſſe poore leaprous women with ſo great ioy, that it is almoſt incredible. The Lords of the Court, & the great Ladies turned their faces away, and felt their hearts to quake, almoſt dying with the ſole imagination of it. The Queene did nothing but laugh at it, ſaying she felt a ſoueraigne ſweetnes which comforted her heart. They mocked at her, & coined a thouſand tales & Court ieſts vpon it. The good Queene ceaſed not to continue, and redouble thoſe (as it were) inimitable acts. On the holie Thurſdayes she cauſed al the women eaten vp with leaprouſie to come into her chamber, washed their feet with her Roial hands, wiped them, and weeping

ping for ioy affectionately kissed the; then serued them their dinner; her selfe wayting at the table; with so good a grace that nothing could be more; lastly she gaue them her owne garments; and put in their hands large Almes, and bidding them farewel; so hartily kissed them, that her maides and women could not choose but let abundace of teares to fal from their eies, beholding this roial spectacle to astonish men and Angels. Good God what an infinite power hath God's grace ouer nature. Wil you beleeue what Ile tel you? But why should you not beleeue it, of such a Princesse framed by so excellent a hand, as was *Delphinae's*? She picked out some one of these miserable creatures, (my heart prompts me she chose the most disfigured of them al,) and laied her in her owne bed, meane while she spent the night vpon a poore Couch;

esteeming

esteeming her selfe most happie to haue put IESVS-CHRIST into her bed, and to haue slept at his feet, since he had vndoubtedly saied: *What is done to the most wretched poore creature of the world, is done to himselfe.* Now here it was, where her Ladies lost their patience. Ah! How Madame (saied they) haue you then a desire to make a spittle of your pallace, and Hospital chamber-wayters of your great Ladies? Know you not this disease is contagious; Do you not imagine whilst you lodge this nastynes in your Royal bed, you may bring this shameful maladie vpon the King, and your Royal Issue? Is it not enough for Kings to build Hospitals, vnles they go into them themselues, or draw them into their cabinets to infect the Court with their impuritie? you wil estraunge al the world from your Court, nor wil there be anie dare approach

proach neare your maieſtie. Howſoeuer, if you wil needs viſit the ſick, and take a turne in the Hoſpital a God's name al the world wil follow you, but to ſee you handle theſe ſo lothſome and vgly women, to ſee them lodged in the bed, wherein your ſelfe intend to lie the next night, to ſet them ſitting at your Table, and we to waite on them (verily Madame) is a matter inſupportable. God himſelfe knowes I feele my heart to riſe at it and am daily almoſt ready to faint, ſeing what we al, to our great greife behold. Gouerne, gouerne your feruours (good Madame) and our liues likewiſe, which truly are much endaungered by al theſe wayes, and hash innouations. We wel ſee it is my Lady the Counteſſe *Delphina*, who kindleth this fire in your heart; That which is ſeemely enough for her, ought not to draw a Conſequence vpon your Maieſty; we haue no great

cauſe

cauſe to commend, her ſince she metamorphoſeth the ſplendor of the Court into a baſe ſpittle, & of a great Queen makes you a ſillie ſeruant of leapers. The pious Counteſſe did only holily ſmile at al this Complaint, but the good Queene tooke the word, and in an accent ſeriouſly ſweet, ſayd; Verily (Ladies) your hearts are very tender, ſince you can not ſuffer, that, which your Miſtreſſe makes but a ſport of: neither you, nor I, thankes be to God, are either dead or fallen ſick, by attending on two or three ſeruants of God in their infirmities. *Ieſus-Chriſt* King of Kings washed the feet of *Iudas*, and you hold it ſtraunge that I a miſerable ſinner haue washed the feet of *Ieſus-Chriſt* in the perſons of theſe poore creatures, who shal one day be Saints in heauen. In al my life time I neuer felt ſo much ſweetnes in my heart, as whilſt, I whilſt I was handling theſe

ſick

ſick folkes; Do you enuie me theſe great celeſtial Happineſſes? But I pray do you not make a Conſcience of it to ſee Maide-ſeruants more nice then their Miſtreſſes, and Ladies, then the Queene? What wil you then ſay to IESVS-CHRIST at the hower of death, when he shal ſet before you, that ſo manie Empreſſes and Queenes had not entred into Paradiſe but by the gate of the Hoſpital, and that you ſo much murmured for caſting an eye on a wretched creature, and haue ſo much abhorred to ſuccour it.

Get thee into hel (curſed ſoule) wil he ſay at the day of iudgement, *for I was ſick, & thou vouchſafedſt not to viſit me.* Do you imagine it wil be ſufficient to ſay, Alas, (Sir) my heart roſe at it? were it not better your heart quaked in an hoſpital, then to ſee it crack in hel, and immortal wormes to gnaw it for euer? The poore Ladies hearing

theſe

theſe heauenly words bluſhed for ſhame, & hid themſelues one behind an other not any one daring to open her mouth to ſpeak a word. The ſilence of tongue, the modeſt bashfulnes of Contenance, and tender teares of eyes made their excuſes with the Queene, who eaſily pardoned them this ſlight exceſſe, and heate of liuer, and al. In the meane time the King died, the Queene glutted with ſilly greatneſſes of the world, & the vanities of Court, forſooke al, and put her ſelfe into a Monaſtery of *S. Clare* at *Naples*, which she had founded, and there tooke the habit of S. *Francis* with the wonder of *Italie*. She lead a holy life in it, and for the ſpace of ten yeares would ſtil haue her deare Miſtreſſe *Delphina* neare her learning from her al the exercizes of ſpiritual life. The ſun gildeth al he toucheth with his reſplendent raies; *Delphina* euerie where made the ſanctitie

ctitie of her perfections to shine, & al the religious women hearing and seing her, learned Modestie; silence, puritie of heart, and al the most eminent vertues of spiritual life. Worldly Comforts are very vnsetled, & subiect to Eclipse. God reuealed to the good *Counteße* he would haue her returne into *Prouence*; needs must she tel it to the Queene, but it was a stabb with a dagger to her heart, she caused prayers to be made to know the wil of God, the issue was she must go into *Prouence*. Her teares and tender affections can not wel be expressed, and at this departure, it verily seemed the Queenes heart was rent asunder, who after God, had no consolation in the world, but in the cõuersation of *Delphina*. Al those paines, and sad sweetnesses were sacrifices to God, and the last kisse must be giuen before departure: your imagination wil tel you the rest, for my pen can

can not expreſſe the bitternes of this ſeperation. In the way, a poore woman aſked her an almes for Gods ſake, For Gods ſake (ſaied she) Alas! Good freind I would giue thee my skin, & heart; she pulled off her garments, gaue it this wretched creature! It was her cuſtome to giue ſometime her owne garmēts, ſometime her ſeruants, and she could not endure to be asked any thing in the name of God, but that she afforded it moſt willingly. Her maides the meane time laughed, and cried al at once ſeing themſelues at euerie turne diſpoyled to cloth the poore, but what should they do, ſeing their holie Miſtreſſe to giue al she could with ſo good a wil for the loue of him, who gaue for vs al his bloud, his bodie, and his life?

Of her returne into Prouence, and the wonders of her life.

CHAP. VII.

HER heart flew, and could not wel be cõtained seing her selfe in ful libertie, and on the point to enioy a retired life so much desired. So soone as she came into *Prouence*, she chose the Castle of *Cabrieres* to attend to the sweetnes of solitude, and to heare what God would dictate in her heart. Her daies were wel ordered, hauing her howers of contemplation, of the reading of good bookes, of needly workes, of acts of Mercie; the daies with her were

were too short, ſo much she had to do. The bookes she delighted in, were the holie ſcripture, the Ghoſpels with ſome interpreters, ſweetly taſting the word of God, aboue al other; The *Soliloquyes* of S. *Auguſtine*; The raptures of his *Confeſſions*: the Manna of *S. Bernard's Meditations* were her ordinarie bookes, & the ſugar with which she ſweetned her innocent deuotions. She moſt ingenuouſly and angelically confeſſed that very often whilſt she read theſe bookes our *Saviour* made her ſo liuely to feele the affections of theſe two worthy men, that she ſometime ſeemed to her ſelfe to be tranſported into heauen. She haſtned not in the reading thē, but relished them by long draughts, and leaſurely read, and againſt reuolued them, caſting amorous glaūces towards heauen, cutting in two her periods with a thouſand ſighes, ſhedding teares on her

poore

poore bookes, which were almoſt al of them blurred and defaced; ſo did ſhe draw in the ſpirit of theſe holy Oracles of true perfection. Were ſhe afterward to ſpeake of God, inſtantly *S. Auguſtine.* was vpon her tongue, and the nectar of *S. Bernard* diſtilled from her lips, ſo that she had an incomparable power ouer their hearts who harkend to her, and it is not to be ſpoken what fruit she brought forth. The Lords and Ladies who viſited her, conceiued ſo great hatred againſt worldly pleaſures & al māner of terren pompe, that they trod it vnder foote. Vſurers with both hands reſtored, what they had drawne to them with one, and curſed the mad hunger of gold and auarice. Many maides made a vow of virginitie; manie of chaſtitie, manie of religion: yea men haſtned to become Hermits, no longer able to endure the poyſonous aire of

the world, and looked after nothing but the harmeles delights of ſolitude. To conclude, al ſuch as heard her diſcourſe of Eternity, & heauenly things, felt I know not what kind of diuine flames, and powerful deſire of vertue to be enkindled in their breaſts. Her diſcourſes were thunder which aſtoniſhed the moſt ſauage hearts, & proſtrated thē at the feet of the Crucifix. Flaſhes of lightning ſtrike downe the lofty tops of inuincible rocks, and the ſame engender precious ſtones falling vpon land wel diſpoſed. *Delphina* thundred in the hearts of the wicked, breaking them in pieces, and in faire ſoules begat precious deſires of perfection. In a ſhort time the face of *Cabrieres* was changed, and the inhabitants notably amended by the ſanctity of this moſt fortunat Counteſſe. One of her particular deuotions was to comfort ſoules ſuffering in *Purgatorie*, and by

the effusiõ of her teares she endeauoured to quench or mitigate the rigour of those most ardent flames. She was seen one day at euening song saying her howres, and in an extraordinary manner powring forth teares; she was asked what novelty had hapned to her: Alas, saith she, *Raymond* Coũt *of Sault*, is vpon yielding vp the ghost to his Creatour, nay the truth is, he is departed in the state of grace: But oh God! He shal for a long time abide in Purgatory, vnles God be very merciful to him, and he greatly comforted by the suffrages of the Church. The howre was obserued, and it was found that in the same instant when she spake this, the sayd Count breathed his last, and dyed in his bed, far off from *Cabrieres*. It is very probable, she much comforted this poore soule, and many others but that is vnknowne, & couered ouer with sacred silence and most profound hu-

humilitie. She likewise did many singular miracles, giuing speach to the dumbe, health to the desperately sick, pulling the halfe-dead out of the hãds of death, and healing incureable leapers. When she was much vrged to cure the infirme (for otherwise she by al meanes excused it) she put her virginal hand vpon the patients head, & sayd; *The soueraigne Creatour of the world, who can do al by his mercy, restore thee to health.* At *Marseilles* likewise she cured other impotent creatures, saying. *I beseech God Omnipotent, and the blessed Virgin Mary,* (these were her own words,) *that out of his great mercy he wil be pleased to take pitty of thee, & to graunt thee health, as I hartily begg it, and require it.* What natiue and innocent simplicity, but yet so powerful, that God accomplished almost al her suits. Let him Cannonize those miracles who wil, for my part, I more esteeme her pro-

found humility, her Angelical purity, her plainneſſe, and doue-like ſimplicity, her haire cloth, and affectionate auſterities; then al her miracles, how great ſoeuer. O goodly miracle to behold her ſo long time a Virgin in the midſt of the Court, as a Diamond among flames and not be melted, nor to haue the luſtre of its ſparkling leſſened! A lambe among ſo manie wolues, and not wounded at al! A great Ladie daily in Court-feaſts; yet rigorouſly to faſt, and only fatning her ſelfe with the bread of ſorow, and nectar of teares. It is an admirable thing to ſee ſo couragious a contempt of al greatnes in the midſt of ſuch greatnes. Kings and Queenes ſo earneſtly deſired to honour her, and viſit her, and ſhe meane time to be proſtrated in the nooke of an Hoſpital to wash the ſtinking feet of ſome Lazar, or winding vp ſome corſe in a sheete for burial!

Be-

Behold miracles, nay behold a wonder ſo much the greater, becauſe the more inimitable by Ladies of Court, and ſoules deepe drenched in the gulph of the world. O goodnes of heauen, how much this holie *Lady* wil condemne manie at the day of iudgment! I would to God I could here expreſſe the ſweet extaſies of her ſoule, and the fauours she receiued from heauen in the ſweetnes of the ſolitude of *Cabrieres*, her deuotions, her ſecret penances, her rough diſciplines, her Colloquies with God, her pleaſing familiarity with the Empereſſe of Angels; The viſits she there receiued, al theſe treaſures are hidden from men, but are wel knowne and engrauen in golden letters within the Annals of heauen. We haue but this only complaint againſt this holie *Ladie*, and other ſaints the ſeruants of God, that they do like nature; which hauing created

treaſures

treasures, hides them what she may, plunging pearles into the bottome of the Ocean, burying mines of gold in the vast sub-vrbes of Hel; fastning Chrystal to the Couert of rocks inaccessible; drenching precious stones in the gulph of deepest seas; Enchasing Ivorie in the slaughtering throte of cruel Elephants; sending the Phenix astray (if such there be) into the thickest of the forrests of *Arabia*; Briefly affoarding vs these wounders at the peril of life, or rendring them almost impossible. The heart of Saints are mines of pure gold of 24. Carats, are quarreyes of precious stones, treasures of God and Angels; but humilitie, silence, modestie, priuacie couers al this, and commonly we only see the bark of sanctitie, the pith being for Angels. *Clement* the sixt then at *Auignon*, hauing heard of this great *Seruant* of God, commanded her to be

brought

brought to him, to make trial of her ſo celebrated vertue. Being come, and hauing kiſſed his *Holynes* feet; the Pope propoſed manie queſtions of ſpiritual life, and of the miſteryes of our holie faith: She blushed very much, and was greatly abashed, ſeing her ſelfe before the Vicar of IESVS-CHRIST, and ſo manie Cardinals who had their eyes fixed on her, admiring her ſingular modeſtie. She excuſed her ſelfe as much as vertue would permit; but fearing to do amiſſe, hauing caſt her eye and heart vp to heauen to inuoke the holy Ghoſt; she began to talke of the holy *Trinitie*, of the Oeconomy of the *Incarnation*, of the ſoueraigne, greatnes of the Miſteryes of faith, with termes ſo proper and Elate, with an accent ſo cleare and cõfident, that al thoſe good men locking vp their lips, and lifting vp their Eye-lids, much amazed; looked one

vpon

vpon another, confeſſing by their, ſilence; that ſo ſupreme wiſdome in a ſimple woman, proceeded from the profound Theologie of Heauen, and needs muſt it be, that *God* alone had taught her this ſingular ſcience. Yea, Doctor *Francis Mairon* a *Cordelier*, and an Oracle of that time, meeting with ſome very hard paſſage of the holy Scripture; communicated his difficulties with her, & was often much amazed, that she could diſcouer vnto him ſo ſublime & perſpicuous interpretations, that it ſeemed (as one may ſay) that God had imprinted in her heart the ordinarie gloſſe of the holy Scripture. It is God's cuſtome to reueale that to ſimple doues which Eagles cānot penetrat, and euer his ſweeteſt, and moſt taſtful Theologie, and conuerſation is among ſoules innocent, and endowed with ſimplicity. The Pope knew it from the mouth of the

father himſelfe, & admired the goodnes of God, who takes delight to diſcouer his impenetrable ſecrets to the humble, & hides them from the moſt Exalted. It is ordinarie with him to make the ſilly lambe to walke on the vaſt Ocean of his greatneſſe, and imprint foot-ſteps there, whilſt the Elephant floateth, and toiles betweene two waters. Thinke with your ſelfe what ſhe might ſay to the ſimple, and what power ſhe muſt haue, ſince ſhe aſtonished Popes, and illuminated the Sunns of the Church. Can you then wonder that she made ſo litle account of the clowdy and miſerable world; Since ſhe ſo euidently ſaw the cleare lights of heauen, and penetrated ſo far into the amorous Abiſſe of Gods deep ſecrets?

The Queen calleth her back again to Naples, and what hapned to her in this iourney, and return into Fraunce.

CHAP. VIII.

WHO hath once taſted the hearb called *Lothos*, can neuer relish any thing els, and he looſeth the appetite to al others things, being vnable to leaue this delicious dainty. He that hath once taſted ſanctity and perfection, diſguſteth ought els, & only delights in it. Queen *Sancia*, hauing taſted *Delphinaes* vertues, could no longer liue without her.

Fowre

Fowre yeares paſſed ſince she was weaned from her, but to ſay truly, theſe fowre yeares ſeemed fowre Ages, to her. She commaunded the Seneſchal of *Prouence* by an expreſſe meſſenger to ſend her back her dear *Delphina*: to *Naples*, at what charge ſoeuer. Al the world was againſt it, eſpecially the good Counteſſe, who hauing taſted the delights of Paradiſe and of ſolitude, would not haue plunged her-ſelf again in the Purgatory of *Naples*; The Seneſchal vrgeth, the Saint alleadgeth a thouſand reaſons in excuſe; vpō which the Seneſchal playing the Diuine (ſaid) If God wil haue it ſo (Madame) would not you? Ah Sir (ſayd ſhe) verily, you ſtop my mouth: Let vs then go to Maſſe, let vs inuoke the holy Ghoſt; If God wil haue it that I goe thither, I wil inſtantly fly, ſo much am I reſolued to wait wholy on the commaunds of my Maſter. Alas! are

we

we to ſeek our own ſatisfactions, or wholy the ſeruice of God, in what he commaundeth? Maſſe is ſayd, she calleth again vpon God, & reſignes herſelfe to his holy Prouidence, but with ſo braue a ſpirit, that God reuealed to her, he would haue her return to Naples. She receaued ſo many lights, ſo many flames, that her face became radiant and bright, which al the world quickly perceiued. She then wholy tranſported, ſayd, Mounſieur Seneſchal, let vs go when you pleaſe, yea preſently if you wil, ſince God wil haue it ſo, let vs go confidently, I haue no wil at al, ſince God hath manifeſted his to me. The poor people of *Cabriers* ſhed a deluge of teares ſeing her to leaue their Countrey. But God muſt be the Maſter, and ſhe muſt part willingly, knowing it to be the wil of her maſter, God alone knows what ſhe did in this iourney, her exerciſes of pietie, her mira-

miracles, her diſcourſes moſt powerful to enkindle hearts, for ſhe loued to talk of nothing but of God, and Eternity. In the end she arriued at *Naples*, & I pray ask me not what entertainment Queen *Sancia* gaue her, who loued her as her own heart, or the aple of her eye. They liued fowre yeares in this Monaſtery like two Seraphins; Saints are as fair flowers, ſome are ſatisfied with beholding them, and admiring their bewty, others ſuch in their odour and moſt fragrant ſauour; Bees alone extract the ſpirit and ſoule of that, of which they make honey. Many hauing ſeen or wel vnderſtood *Delphina* were fully ſatisfied; The Queen and her cõpanions drew forth the honey of heauen, and the marrow of ſolid vertues, with which they nourished their ſoules. A main proofe wil be in ſo much as this good Queen during her life and after her death did

many

many miracles, teſtimonies of the ſanctitie of her life, and of what she had learned from the holy Counteſſe. The Hiſtory affordeth vs not the comfort of vnderſtanding the happie circumſtancies of the death of this bleſſed Queen, who at the end of fowre yeares deceaſed in the armes of her deer *Delphina*. Figure vnto your ſelf al the ſweetnes, al the affections of a fair death, and reſt aſſured it comes very neer to what hapned to a Saint dying between the armes of ſo precious a Saint. So ſoon as she was vnder the ground, and that al duties were performed according to the qualitie of the one and charitie of the other, the holy Virgin returned into *Prouence*, and went to end her dayes in the Citty of *Apt* in *Prouence* where the bodie of *Elzear* lay.

There encreaſing in perfection ſhe diſpoſed herſelfe to holy pouerty going

going, begging her own liuing, and for her cõpanions, from door to door. Some wept for ſhame and deuotion, ſeing ſo great a Lady reduced to the wallet, for the only loue of *Ieſus Chriſt*, others with bended knees, and kiſſing the litle they gaue her, accounted themſelues moſt happy to haue put their hands into the innocent hand of ſuch a beggar. But as the world is naught, many did nothing but laugh at it, and inſtead of Almes, threw vpon her a thouſand ſlaunders & reproachs. They called her beggar, Idles-by, old fool, and Hypocrit, ſily, brainleſſe woman. Go (ſaid they) go old Sibil, get you gon in Gods name to toil, and get your liuing. Go beg almes of thoſe, to whom you haue giuen your whole eſtate. Verily it is good for you to ſee what goodly liuings you haue giuen to men more rich then we, and now to come to rob the poor, and pul the morcel

cel out of their mouthes. Is it not a goódly buſines to behold ſuch a Counteſſe to go vp and down begging, and craving ſo from door to door, with a company of ſturdy rogues, who preſent you with a wooden dish to haue ſome ſcraps? Why beg you not of thoſe Moncks and Friers, to whom you gaue al? Their pottage is much fatter then ours: Go then to their gate; and ſince you ſo much loue leapers, take the clapper in hand, and go a begging through the ſtreets; Is it reaſon, is it fit to take bread out of our childrens hands to giue it you? Curſed be he who giues to one richer then himſelf, and ſo makes this ſort of beggarly people to be lazy, who doe nothing but vex vs. Good God! what ioy she felt in her heart at this shame, she thanked God for it, as for a great fauour; She beſought him ſuch almes might often be giuen her, and ſuch liberal

liberal charities, which she more esteemed, then if they had bestowed mountaines of gold vpon her, she praied God with much tendernes for these indiscreete ones, who did hear these affronts. Good God of heauen, how different are the thoughts of Saints from worldlings! Another would haue died for shame to see herself so vsed, but she cõtrary-wise took an incomparable delight in being despised by al the world. Returning into her Oratory she powred forth her whole heart before God, and earnestly besought him so to handle the matter she might not be known to the world for his spouse, that she might be accounted a wretched sinner (as indeed she was) that al the would might take pleasure to lead her with shame, saying that since the sonne of God had bin the reproach of the world (who was the eternal wisdom adored by Angels

that it was more then moſt reaſonable that a Captiue woman, as herſelfe, ſhould be deſpiſed by al the world. She feared nothing ſo much, as to ſee herſelf honoured and praiſed. Alas! (ſaid she) how much I doubt leaſt this poor-winde of flattery and foolish applauſe may be the reward of my ſily trauels. O what a fauour should God beſtow on me if he would hide theſe ſlight glimmers of vertue he hath giuen me vnder the ashes of contempt, and humiliation! When this noble virgin prayed to God, and ſaid her howers, it was with ſuch attention, and her ſpirit was ſo fixed vpon God, that one might walk backward and forward by her, and she neuer to perceiue it. One day being at dinner she felt a ſtrong aſſaults to be giuen to her heart, that she cried out, O my God! O my God! and then held her peace, and hauing her eyes (as it were) fixed in heauen, she

she remained a ful hower immoueable, and almoſt, ſenſeleſſe, ſuſpended in God, and rapt in an extaſy, Then comming to her ſelf, she forſook dinner, Table, and al, and being replenished with God, went to her Oratory, where she ended dinner with God, powring forth two torrents of pretious teares. Her maides wittily made her to change her handkerchiffs for that they very oftē were moiſtned with teares, almoſt as many times as she came from her deuotions they wrung her handkercheff into a vial, where hauing got togeather ſome few drops of this water, they made vſe thereof to giue (she vnwitting) to many infirme who were miraculouſly cured by it. Her deareſt delights were to meditate on the paſſion of *Ieſus-Chriſt*, in this red ſea she found al the treaſures of vertue. But hers was a deuotion,

ſimple, ſolid, and which concluded in greet humility, mortification of paſſions, and true charity. It was none of thoſe deuotions, which vapour away in the ſmoake of quaint words, and ſublimity of eminent phraſes, which moſt vnprofitably amuſe many minds: For hearing themſelues to ſpeak of matters ſo elate, they beleeue themſelues to be as they ſpeak, but this moſt times is but babble. The tongue of a Seraphin, a heart ful of ſelf-loue, a ſpirit puffed vp with winde, an empty deuotion, finally they are like peacocks who haue the head of a ſerpent, voice of a diuel, and plumage of an Angel: but withal this, nothing of value is done, only a litle oſtent. Beſids the profit she derived to her ſelfe out of her true deuotion, God wrought miracles by her. A great mortality miſerably vnpeopled *Prouence*, & *Delphine*, she whilſt, she prayed to God for theſe

poore

poor afflicted creatures maſſacred this death, which killed the world, & moreouer moſt humbly beſought God, he would forthwith cure ſoules, ſince the ſinnes of ſoules infected the bodies of mortals; which was done, for a notable change was ſeen throughout the Countrey, one made a vow of pouerty, one of chaſtity and another of pilgrimage; ſuch an one led the life of an Angel, who was before a very diuel. Breifly this mortality, was the cauſe of an incredible good, by the happy mediation of the virgin *Delphina*, who was the propitious ſtarr, and good preſage throughout al *Prouence*. There happened a matter worthy to be couched in this place. The Lord *Henry* cheif of Iuſtice of *Prouence* was condemned to keepe his bed, and it was now two yeares that a cruel paine of the head had (as it were) fixed him to the pillow of his bed: It happened that

Delphina

Delphina begging through the Citty came to the gate of *Henry* asking a peece of bread for Gods ſake. The ſeruants amazed to ſee ſuch a perſon ſtretch out a hand at the gate, ran to the Maſter of the houſe; by diuine inſpiration he himſelf would needs carry it; he haſtily leapes out of his bed, throwes his gowne ouer his shoulders, runs to the gate, kiſſed the almes, gaue it her, & ſaid, Alas! Madam, you your ſelfe are wel able to giue me an almes, and I in my turn ask it, of you in the name of IESVS-CHRIST! She felt her heart to be compaſſionat, and notwithſtanding the honeſt excuſes which her humility would haue cauſed her to make, she had ſo much charity, she neither could nor durſt refuſe this gentle requeſt: She then put her hand vpon his head, and ſaid, God omnipotent through his holy goodnes haue pitty on thee, and reſtore thee

to

to health; No ſooner pronounced, but done, for the cheife Iuſtice raiſed himſelf vp in perfect health, thanking the *Saint* for ſo notable a benefit, and publiſhed the miracle throughout al *Prouence*.

A ſtrange Hiſtory happened in this time, and a very great Miracle.

CHAP. IX.

AT this time there was a cruel warr in *Prouence*, & among other there were many Gaſcoynes. One day the Caſtle of *Anſoi* was beſeidged, and being sharply aſſailed, it ſeemed humanely to be i

n

no ſort tenable, and that they muſt parley. The enemie eſpying a fauourable and a very dark night, thought to ſurprize the fortreſſe by ſcaling it; preſently the Ladders were ſet, the ſouldiours in a deepe ſilence mount vp one after another al of them with ſword in hand. Behold them on the battlements, but (O ſtrange) it ſeemed to them they ſaw al the Town ful of lights, and fires, al the ſtreets furnished with ſouldiours, whereupon they were ſeized with a panique fear; and ſo horrible an affrightment, that al haſtily leaping down, and falling half dead, and maymed, one vpon another, they fled as faſt as their legs could carrie them and caſt themſelues for ſafetie into a church which was very neere. They within made in their turn a fierce ſally, and falling vpon the Gaſcoynes, who were ouertaken, although they brauely, defended

ded themſelues, they had the worſt, and among others, *Durant Arnaut*, Lieutenant to the Captain of the Gaſcoynes was taken priſoner. This Captain had played the *Hanibal* in this ſeidge, and hauing done a thouſand miſcheifes to the poore beſeidged, they for ſpite laid hould of their Lieutenant; The giddie multitude incenſed, without any forme of arraignment, ſeized on the body of poore *Durant*, and threw him headlong into the firſt Well they could finde, which was no ſooner done but they began to caſt many ſtones, to knock him down with blowes, and accounted him no good patriote, who threw not a heauie ſtone vpon him. The Wel was very deep. The poore man remembred himſelf by diuine inſpiration, that the Lady of the Caſtle was a Saint, ſo that falling he ſaid; Ah holy Counteſſe, let me not die without

Confeſ-

Confeſſion. Alas! I recommend my ſoule vnto thee! He was left there for dead, and drenched into the bottome of the Wel. In the bottome of the Wel he found the truth of diuine promiſes, and that neuer any one hath recourſe to the diuine goodnes, but findes help. Three dayes after, one paſſing neare to the Well, certain faint lamentations were heard to come from below, he hearkned with horrour, and ſaw this poore man who bubled vpon the water, as ſwimming on the top of it, and calling for aid. The ſtrangenes of this accident changed the fiercenes of theſe people into pittie and commiſeration. They preſently caſt ropes, they encouraged the miſerable man, and ſo handled the matter that they drew him vp. Al the world ran thither to behold a man come out of the other world, they thought to ſee a Ghoſt, and could not be ſatisfied with looking

looking on him with their eyes, and to meaſure him with eager glaunces from head to foot. In the end they brought him in to the market place, and asked him of this ſo ſtraunge accident. The poore ſouldiour, ſtil much affrighted (fetching his breath thick) ſaid, he had much recommended himſelf to the holy Counteſſe, Lady of the Caſtle, and that she had voutchſafed to help him, yea done him the honour to aſſiſt him with her preſence. Wel but how came it to paſſe (ſaid they) ſo many blowes with ſtones had not a hundred and a hundred time ouerwhelmed you? Alas! Sirs, replied the poore man, she receaued al the violent hail-ſtorme in the skirt of her gown, and poured them down ſoftly into the Wel, not ſuffering ſo much as one of them to touch me or wound my body; And I muſt tel you beſides that daily she gaue me to eat what I needed

needed for theſe three dayes whilſt I was in the Wel abandoned as a miſerable carcaſſe, yea she promiſed me, I ſhould in short time go out of this place which you ſee accomplished by the goodnes of God, and the helping hād of this moſt bleſſed Saint of heauen. Come hither Captaine (ſaid one) know you her if you ſee hir? for she is ſtil liuing. Liuing (ſaid he) alas! I should know her among a hundred thouſand women, ſo deeply haue I her Image engrauen in the bottome of my ſoule. Wherefore in the name of God doe me the fauour to let me ſee this great ſeruant of God, that I may proſtrat my ſelf at her feet, acknowledging to ow my life to God & and her alone. He was brought to the Cittie of *Apt*, the Religious women were entreated to come with *Delphina.* in a troop to ſee if he could pick her out amōg the reſt O how clearſighted

eies

eies hath loue, and what a good memory hath gratitude to remember benefactors: ſo ſoon as he ſaw her, he went directly to her, threw himſelf ſodainly at her feet with teares in his eyes; Behold here, (ſaith he) behold here (ſweet Lady) the miſerable wretch you drew out of the bottome of the Abiſſe; Ah! how much am I bound to you for ſauing two liues in me at once, both of body and ſoule, for dying in this ſtate I verily think I had irrecouerably bin damned. Since you haue reſcued me from two gulphes, for the loue of God, help me to ſaue this poore ſoul of mine. He drew teares from the eyes of al the company, hearing a ſouldiour to talk like a Saint. The good Counteſſe ſmilling with a heauenly alacrity, and ſincerely aſcribing the glory of this miracle to God alone, comforted him with good counſel. Freind (ſaid she) leaue this profeſſion

feſſion of Iron and Armes; amongſt bloud and cruelty of warres, vertue is in captiuity, and it ſeemes that to be a good ſouldiour, one muſt become an euil man. In armes there is no talk of God, but by blaſpheming him, nor is he known, but to for-ſwear him. Get you out of the world, and a litle bethinking you of your conſcience, make confeſſion of your paſſed life, and meditat vpon heauen and Eternity. Be a ſoldier of *Ieſus-Chriſt* Fight againſt your ſelfe, and warr againſt your paſſions, employ your ſtrength, not to maſſacre your enemies, but to ſubdue and tame your body which is the Captain of your true enemies. Power out no more the bloud of men, but shed teares to wash away your ſinnes. God hath drawn you out of a Wel ful of water, for fear you might fal into the ſulphurous pit of hel. Acknowledge this act from his hand, and this accident

accident from his eternal Prouidence, and neuer forged the great mercie God hath don you, by ſo ſingular a miracle. Graſp the Buckler of Faith, the Helmet of Confidence, the Cuiraſſe of Conſtancy, the Armes of ſaluation & vertue, the keeneſword of true penance, with theſe armes you may be aſſured to gain eternal Laurels. Do this, and you ſhal liue, and ſhal finde that the mouth of this Wel shal be as the throat of the Whale, which receiued and caſt forth *Ionas*: but hauing taken him-in a ſinner, ſhe rendered him a Saint. Had you not bin thrown into the Wel, neuer peraduenture would you haue mounted to heauen: ſo vſe the matter that this fortunat Wel, may haue bin to you another font of Baptiſme, and forget not this bleſſing from God. Theſe words ſanck deep into the heart of this poor ſouldiour, for he was ſo liuely touched,

that

that he forſook al, retired into a litle Church ſituated in a ſolitary place, & hauing made a good general Confeſſion became a Hermit, did a moſt sharp penance, led the life of a ſouldiour of IESVS-CHRIST, and of an Angel; and ſo wel and hanſomely behaved himſelf that in two yeares, he came to ſuch an eminent degree of perfection, that he did many miracles, and died like a *Saint*. We cannot know the circumſtances of his happie death, becauſe he died amongſt Rocks without any witnes but Angels, but what the Deſarts cannot relate, God hath told by the mouth of miracles, the Trumpets of his ſanctity. The noiſe of this miracle, with ſo many other wonders daily ſeene, drew a world of people deuout and needy, who rann from al parts, hoping thence to deriue ſome conſolation. Al asked at their arrival (my freind) where abides the holy

Coun-

Coũteſſe ? (nor was ſhe otherwiſe called.) The more they ſought her, the more she hid herſelf, nor would she ſee any. A good Preiſt came & tould her, there was an infinite number of good people come thither, & al ardently deſired to ſee her, naming her the holy Coũteſſe. She blushed, then grew pale, & laſtly had much a-doe to finde her tõgue to anſwer this ſummons: Since theſe good people ſo much deſire to ſee the Saint (Sir ſaid she) I beſeech you let them. I am ſo vnhappy as not to know her, nor can I tel of whõ they ſpeak, for I am more then moſt confident; it is not me they ſeeke. Saint! Alas! Is it me (wretch) whom they eſteeme a Saint? Me a Caytiue Woman, a miſerable ſinner, and beſids, vnworthy to be called any thing but the ſeruant of Gods ſeruants. O how long time haue I importuned heauen to doe me the fauour that al the world

might know me, & to take me for such as I am, to wit, for a creature vnworthy of al honour, worthy of al scorn, faithlesse to my God, vngrateful towards heauẽ, vnprofitable to al good, burthẽsome to al the world, & to say true the dregs of men, & mud of the earth. If I be termed a *Saint* to mock at me, I account it a fauour, for they doe to me what I deserue; but if through simplicitie and abuse I be so called, verily my heart is deepely wounded, nor can any thing happen more afflicting, or more painful to me then this vanity. I wish they would let me alone. As! let me alone to deplore my sinns in silence; and permit me to tame my pride, and suffer it to be trampled vnder the feet of al the world; That truly is it, I must doe; but what apparence can there be, they should come so cruelly to persecute me vnder the colour of honouring me, as if I were somwhat

ſomwhat? In the mean time she held her peace and wept, and endeauoured wholy to retire, that the eye of the world might not for a time ſee her. The good Preiſt much amazed, and ſeeing the errour hee had committed, cunningly diuerted this ſpeach, and deceiued the innocent Doue. Madame (ſaied he) in what ſence doe you take my words! Al the world is come hither to viſit holy *S. Elzear* (whoſe wife you haue had the honour to be.) They wel know the miracles God doth by his mediation.

They conſtantly beleeue there is not any one vnder heauen hath more credit with him, then you, whom he heretofore ſo deerly loued: They think they cannot doe better then to put their moſt humble ſuites into your hands, that you may preſent them at the Count's Sepulcher: Wil you refuſe them this charitie, you; who are

ſo good as not to deny ought to any? Contribute; Madame, to the honour of your deere Spouſe, and to the comfort of theſe poore miſerable creatures, who eſteem you holy, for that you were the happy wife of ſo great a *Saint.* The moſt doue-like credulous woman belieued what was ſaid to her, as if it had bin vndoubted truth, and inſtãtly praied to her husband for them, moſt charitably entertained them, & ſeeing herſelf on al ſides preſſed with many queſtiõs, ſpake diuers excellẽt things, and inſenſibly ſet her ſelf to diſcourſes of heauen, a matter which infinitely comforted this deuout company. Madame (ſaid they) what Counſel gaue my Lord *Elzear* to people of our condition, to be ſaued? As I thinke he accuſtomed (ſaid she) to affirme ſomwhat to this purpoſe, that rich men could not be ſaued but by almes, the poor by vertuous ſuffering, the wife by

by the courageous contempt, of glory, and by a ſolid mortification of their iudgment, women by great deuotion and obedience, Maides by a ſweet fear, and a puritie perpetually trembling, and in general al the world by an affectionat fear of God. He that would not be damned muſt euer fear to be. Often thinke, you shal quickly die, and doe as thoſe who vnder the Ward of a priſon are by their own conſcience condemned to death; as many times as the door keeper openeth the priſon gate imagin the throat of death is opened, Euery one ſeemes to be the hangman, who comes to lay hold of them to drag forth & execute them; They take pleaſure in nothing but to think of death, and to prepare themſelues thereunto, al other things trouble them much. They eat only to keep them aliue. They ſleep to learn to dye, ſleep being but an eſſay of death

death. They liue to die, and al their ambition is to mock at al ambition, & deſpiſing earth to endeauour to purchaſe heauen. To ſay truly, the World is nought els but a priſon, al men Criminals, life a death, or the fore-runner of death, al creatures are the executours of Gods ſupream Iuſtice, and euery moment, death hath an arme lifted vp to fetch about his murderous ſithe, and cut vs down: He who beleeues this, he cannot chooſe but liue as he ought to be ſaued. She ſpake many things to them of the like tenor, heartily praied for them, attributing the fauours God did them by her praiers, to holy S. *Elzear*, but God knowes it was cheifely for *Delphina* ſake theſe bleſſings were cõferred on theſe good ſoules, who returned greatly ſatisfied to haue ſeen and heard ſo eminent a ſervant of God, finding themſelues for the moſt part eaſed of their paines.

of

Of her laſt ſickneſs, and her moſt happy death.

CHAP. X.

SAINTS are in this world perpetually ſick with an affectionat languiſhmēt, which makes them hate this miſerable life, and to deſire death & Eternity. *Delphina* had this continual feaver vpon her, which with a gentle fire waſted her, but it was the feauer of diuine loue, the thirſt of the waters of the torrents of Paradiſe, ſweates of bloud, and ſweet ſufferings. Her great auſterities in the end enflamed her bloud, her faſts and contemplations ſo exhauſted her that ſhe

ſhe fel ſick to the Death. She felt the blow and dart Croſſe her heart, ſhe inſtantly imagined herſelf to be ſtrucken with death, and prepared herſelf as holy people vſe. The firſt thing was to haue recourſe to heauen, and to the Church, arming herſelf with diuine Sacraments: ſhe confeſſed, but O God! with what effuſions of teares, what a Tempeſt of ſighes & ſobs, what amorous contrition, what profound humility! ſhe communicated, and made ſo tender colloquies, ſhot forth words ſo enkindled with the loue of God, with a countenance ſo flaming and Seraphical, that one muſt haue no eyes nor heart not to be diſſolued into teares. Preſently al the religious Women, proſtrated round about her bed, were ſo tranſported and bedeawed with teares, that their hearts almoſt cracked. Amongſt theſe great & ſharp dolours, al ſhe ſpake was to praiſe God, Alas,

ſaid

ſaid ſhe, How much am I bound to God! Sweet IESVS, what can I ſay to thee, to thank thee for this mercy of voutchſafing here to chaſtize my ſinns, and to do me the honour of affording me a litle peece of thy Croſſe, and a ſmal drop of the gal of thy moſt bitter and moſt painful paſſion: Me wretched, who ſo much haue offended thee, and yet ſo litle ſuffer. Strike, my God, ſtrike this carcaſſe, burn, cut, tear in a thouſand peeces this euil body, the true cauſe of my ſad miſhaps, & ſource of my diſaſters, & groſſe errours. Ah, yet moſt happy to ſuffer ſomewhat, & to vndergoe iuſt puniſhment from the ſharpe-ſweet Iuſtice of my ſoueraigne Maſter. She ſwallowed down medecines as if it had bin nectar, and pils as confits, al was ſweet to her, ſhe ſugaring it with the wormwood of the paſſion of IESVS-CHRIST: A burning Cautery the prick of a lancet, and al thoſe

thoſe poor martyrdomes of the ſick were very pleaſing to her, ſhe ſaying, her ſinnes deſerued it, Alas! nay much more. Al her impatiencies were but a ſweet impatience of not being patient enough according to her own ſaying, and verily to ſee *Iob*, *Tobias*, a Saint & *Delphina*, were al one. Out of her bleſſed mouth no words proceeded but of God, and of the prayſes of God.

Her countenance ful of ſerenitie, & as one who went to the eternal nuptials of the lamb, and his immortal ſpouſe. She gaue aduice to al ſuch as viſited her, but ſo to the purpoſe, that it ſeemed she read in their hearts, & had the keyes of them, ſo directly she hit the mark, and laid her fingar on the wound. She comforted al thoſe who came to conſolat her, and wiped away the teares from other, she shed none herſelf, shewing a dry eye, and as ſweet, as if ſhe felt no paine. Her

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iaculatory prayer was the verſicle of *Dauid.* Pſal. 21 :20. which came from her heart and mouth almoſt euery moment. *Tu autem domine ne elongaveris auxilium tuum a me, ad defenſionem meam reſpice.* Alas ! Alas ! Withdraw not from me (o Lord) the fauourable aſſiſtance of thy holy Bounties, & haue euer an eye vpon me to defend me, ſince I am ſo bad, that of my ſelf I can neither help or defend me. Take pittie of this wretched creature. Her ſweeteſt entertainment was to cauſe the paſſion of *Ieſus-Chriſt* to be read; out of this Abiſſe of acerbities, she drew taſtful ſweetnes, and incomparable lenitiues, would you (ſaid she) that I complain of my ſlight euils, I a worm of the earth, conſidering the ſonne of God ſuffered innocētly without ſpeaking any one word of complaint? Who hath a Tongue to bemoan himſelf, hath no eyes to behold the bloudie

bloudie wounds of this amorous Lamb, nor a heart to loue him. O a thouſand times moſt happy ſoules, who wel can reliſh the ſweet bitternesſes of the dolorous paſſion of our Sauiour IESVS-CHRIST; Good God! how light ſeeme their paines to them, and their Mārtyrdomes affectionatly pleaſing! Theſe tender touches of dying *Delphina*, opened the hearts of al there preſent, & the poor religious Women had their eyes fixed vpon her eyes, and their eares to her lips, and to ſay truly they al ſeemed willing to dy with her. Euery one vnanimely diſpoſed themſelues to pray almighty God ſhe might not dye on that day dedicated to S. *Catherin*, that they might haue a day free to celebrat the fortunat feſtiual of her death. In ſuch ſort that theſe Virgins cannonized her before her death. So true it is, that her ſanctity was very eminent, and acknowledged

ledged by al. They gaue hex Extrem-Vnction which ſhe receiued as a Saint of heauen, whilſt they annoint her virginal body, she moiſtned al with her teares, dying with ioy to ſee her ſelf ſo neer vnto heauen.

After that, one *Gerrard of Caßanoua* came to viſit her, and took her by the hand to feel her pulſe, and to know if she were paſt recouery. Her ſoule much better felt this touch, then her body; for thruſting out al the hopes of life vpon her lips: Ah ſonne (ſaid ſhe) yeild your ſelf vp to God, who ſo long time hath ſought you. Oh, did you know what thoughts one hath, when he is where I am. Good God, how much would you change your life! Good Sir think with your ſelf that ſoon you ſhal be, where you now behold me: What you would haue done, Alas! doe it ſeaſonably! Ah what afflicting greifes wil you haue in the bed

of

of death, remembring within your ſelf the time you haue loſt, by entertayning your heart vpon fooliſh fancies! In the name of God make vſe of my words, and of the cõdition wherein you now ſee me. I liued in a flouriſhing ſtate, adored in the Court; I haue bin heretofore rich and powerful in fauours; Now of honours, greatnes, and innocent delights, yea of al which the world can giue or promiſe vs I haue had ſufficiẽt, I haue ſeen the vanity of al theſe ſmoakes, & mocked with in my ſelf at theſe worldly toyes. Behold me now half-rotten and ſtinking bet ween the armes of death. Behold me vpon the point to ſee my ſelf ſentenced without appeal, & with a rigour worthy of the infinit Iuſtice of God. Behold me in the laſt inſtant of my life which makes me hath bin but a ſlight moment. Ah! For Gods ſake (deare freind) think of the ſtate wherein you now ſee me,

and

beleeue it you quickly ſhal be in pain, and shal haue no other comfort but the remembrance of the litle you haue done for the glory of God, and the ſaluation of your ſoule. Her pain took away the reſt of her diſcourſe, & made her words dye in her mouth. This Gentleman was touched to the quick, and in the tendereſt part of his heart, and felt his ſoule ſo tranſported with her heauenly shaftes, and with ſuch preſſing words that he wholy changed his life drenching al his ſinns in in a ſea of teares, and drowning them in a general Confeſſion. It ſeemed that our Lord had preſerued the holy Counteſſe to that howre to ſaue the ſoule of this poor Gentleman, as *Elzear* dying had conuerted another. Short time after came a good Preiſt, but very plain and ſimple, for he had but one certain Forme which he applied to al ſick folkes, whether it were fit or not becauſe

becauſe she knew no other.

Madame (ſaid he) fear not death I pray, and caſt al your hope vpon our good God who died for vs, enter into his woundes and die in them, and be not affrighted, for to die in life, Madame, is not to die. The Saint awakened and beheld him with an eye ful of comfort, shewing she took contentment in the diſcourſe of the good man, and ſaid to him in a very ſweet manner. Father, I neuer leſſe feared death, then now, when I haue it between my teeth, ſtil haue I much more dreaded life, then death; By the goodnes of my good God, life and death are things ſo indifferent to me, that if I were put to my choice, verily I could not reſolue, but muſt of neceſſitie remit al into the hands of God; who much hath not loued life, much feares not death. When we liue for God, and die for him, life is a death, and death a life

life. What care I whither I liue or die ſo that I liue to God, and die to my ſelf? Alas! (deer Father) how ſweet is death to ſuch as loue *Ieſus-Chriſt*. Yea but we shal go into Purgatory. Father, let vs goe, let vs goe into Purgatory, what need ſo many ceremonies, why make we ſuch a-doe to goe whether God wil? If we wel loue God, Purgatory wil become a Paradiſe to vs; if we loue him not, we deſerue to ſink into the bottome of hel. Wretch that I am, ſhal I be ſo apprehenſiue of going into Purgatory, louing a hundred and a hundred times too wel deſerued hel? Let vs goe (O my ſoule) let vs goe into Purgatory, we there ſhal finde God, and finding him, there is neither fire nor flame can aſtonish me. For my hope in IESVS-CHRIST (good Father) you giue me a ſoueraigne remedy; I can aſſure you my heart is in his woundes, and my ſoule is plunged in

his bloud; my ſinnes verily ſomwhat terrifie me; but the infinity of his mercies afford me ſo many hopes, that in the height of my feares, I dread nothing. He is al my confidence, al my ſupport, and in him are al my treaſures concluded. She ſpake this with ſuch a feruour that her eyes were ſeen to ſpatkle; & her face to be al one fire. Theſe were the laſt agonies of her heart, and laſt flames of the coles of her charitie. After she had ended this diſcourſe, I know not what she ſaw, or ſaw not, but I know that caſting an amorous glaunce towards heauen, & her face replenished with extraordinary ſerenity, she began to ſing theſe ſweet wordes, *Domine, Domine aperi nobis*, Open O Lord, open to vs thoſe golden gates of Paradiſe; Alas! you haue ſo often ſaid, that you wil open to al ſuch who shal knock at heauen gate; Alas! Alas! Open then, open

my

my deer ſpouſe (al my loue) open to me, and ſuffer my ſoule, which is about to yſſue forth of this miſerable body, to enter into that godly habitation, where is al which I loue; Al their heartes shooke who were about her bedd, they feared this extaſy ſo ſweet and violent might carrie away her ſoule, and lift it vp to heauen, al of them diſſolued into teares, and proſtrated on their knees, hauing their hearts ſo ſtopped, and mouthes ſo drie they could neither pray nor ſpeak. In the meane time the Saint as a Swan of Paradiſe ſinging and recording the diuine motter from heauen, *Domine, Domine aperi nobis*, happily ſighing after her good Maſter, ſo ſweetly expired that she was in Paradiſe before it was thought she was dead. O fortunate deceaſe! O thrice, O fowre times moſt happy death! To ſing dying, to die ſinging, and on the wing of a

breath of Paradiſe to flie directly into Paradiſe, to continue this bleſſed ſong to al Eternity in the company of Angels! Could she die otherwiſe, hauing liued ſo! What a happines to make the day of her death to be the day of her Wedding, hauing vowed and ſo pretiouſly preſerued the vow of chaſtitie? Happie moments, which purchaſed for her ſo glorious an immortalitie! Happie virginity, which euerlaſtingly ioyned her to this diuine Lamb! Happie pouertie, which hath made her ſo puiſſant a Princeſſe aboue the firmament! O moſt happie life crowned with ſo braue a death! She yeilded vp her moſt bleſſed Soule to her Creator about the yeare. 1360. on the 26.th. of Nouember, and the 76. of her age, at the howre when the Eaſtern Sun began to peep aboue the earth. She was buried, as she had ordayned, to wit, with the habit of the third

third order of *S. Francis*, but not without pomp and honour, as she would haue had it. For who could haue held the Bishop of *Apt*, and the whole bodie of the Cittie, yea the nobilitie of places adiacent to run thither by heapes, and to doe al possible honours and dues to such a Counteſſe, to such an eminent benefactreſſe of al *Prouence*, and to so great a Saint! Who could restrain the zeal of those good and most religious Father of the order of S. *Francis* of the Conuent of *Apt*, but that they would with great solemnitie receiue this pretious treasure, this so holy a relique, to enchace it in the heart of their Church, and bleſſe their houſe? Who could restrain al the poor, who had loſt their Protectrice, the Orphans, who no longer had a mother; the Religious women, who saw their sun eclipsed; The Infirme, who no more had that, so most propitious

pitions assistance?

Al kinde of miracles were done; as wel by the toutching of this precious bodie, as at her Toomb, incessantly enuironed with al sorts of sick. Diuels were driuen out, infirme cured, benummed, lame, yea the dead restored; but in my opinion the braueſt miracles of al were the conuersion of sinners. For many debauched women, many mischieuous lewd people, and men of il life were so much touched, and their hearts bowed with so strong contrition, that in a very short time, admirable changes, appeered. Such was the life, such was the death of these two Phenixes of *Frãce*. Maist thou (Freindly Reader) maist thou so seriously behold thy self in these two bright mirrours, to imitat so holy a life, and die a death so happie, and so blessed by hauen. The Conuent of *Apt* is too fortunat to haue

these

theſe two holy bodies in the boſome of it, but verily it deſerueth it, rendring them ſo much honour, and ſo worthily honouring the treaſure of theſe venerable reliques. They are two glorious ſunnes shining in the third order of S. *Frauncis*, and two ſingular miracles of *Fraunce*.

Of ſome Miracles happened after her death.

CHAP. XI.

THE holy Fathers haue ſayd wel, that to be a virgin, was more then to be an Angel, but what it is to be a virgin, and a maryed wife, is a thing they haue neuer mentio-

mentioned, nor can I tel what this miracle of vertues may be called, Yea this vertue, vnknowne through the whole old Teſtament til the bleſſed virgin Mary, who firſt of al receyued this incomparable fauour. Whoſoeuer is arriued to this height of ſanctity, wil make it eaſily be thought, there is not any kind of miracle which God may not do by their hands. In general I can tel you, that at her tombe in an inſtant were many miracles of al ſortes done: people, who were eaten through with feſtering Fiſtules, who had their feete benummed, and ſinewes shrunke vp, who were afflicted with other maladyes, worne with feauers which deuoured their ſubſtance, dryed vp their bloud, and the marow of their bones; lame, deformed with putrifying, and contagious botches, breiffly al manner of ſick Perſons were reſtored into being, and ſtrength by

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the Prayers of the diuine Counteſſe. S. *Gregory of Nazianzen* ſaith, that a litle of the powder of S. *Baſil* with a good prayer had power to do al, I certainly belieue it, and I belieue it alſo of other holy ſeruants of God, and in particular of the virginal powder of this bleſſed body of the glorious Coũteſſe. *Monet Vinſon* had been long maryed without any children, he vndertooke a deuotion to beg it from heauen by the interceſſion of the bleſſed *Delphina*, the ſame yeare he had a goodly ſonne, but his deuotion, was not ſuch that becõming a Father, he would become an *Abraham*: yet by miſhap it ſo fel out, and in a ſtrange manner; For the litle boy, being hardly three yeares old, and innocently ſporting in the houſe, heedleſſly threw it ſelf into the throte of death. The vnfortunate Father hauing a great piece of wood in his hand, and lifting it vp boyſterouſly

to

to caſt it on the grownd, flang it directly vpon the head of the poore innocent, and ſtrooke out his braynes. Who euer ſaw a deſperate Father, let him looke on this miſerable man, ready to burſt with anger: To whom shal this wretch betake himſelfe? To the innocent Executioner, or to the victime much more innocent, or to heauen which permitted this extreme mishap? The mother loued it ſo wel, that she had rather this blow had cleft her owne heart in ſunder, then fallen on the head of this litle Angel. After they had throughly ſtormed, and curſed their euil fortune; in concluſion they muſt reſolue on ſomewhat. Misfortunes very often make people deuout, & force many to haue recourſe vnto God.

This poore man did like the *Sunamite* who had obtayned a ſonne from the Prophet, and afterward it being dead, she required it of him againe, ſaying

he

he had not deliuered it vnto her ſo to take it away in its age of innocency. The diſconſolate creature caſts himſelf at the feete of the holy Counteſſe. Madame, ſaith he, you gaue him me, my misfortune hath bereaued me of him, I aske him back againe, verily I wil either dy at your feete or you shal do me the fauour to reſtore me this child, which God by your meanes afforded me, to be the ſupport of my life. Alas! It had been better for me not to haue had him at al, then thus to looſe him. Holy Counteſſe take pitty of this, caytiue ſinner, who hath no hope but in God and you, teares concluded the reſt, and the true ſorrow of her heart. At the ſame inſtant the child reuiued againe, the ſoule re-ẽtred into the body, and the Father caryed him to the Church to offer him to the good Counteſſe, and to preſent him to the bleſſed S. *Francis*. Two other dead were

reſtored

reſtored to life by the ſame meanes: but aboue al is conſiderable, that *Iohn Raymond* of the Dioceſe of *Gap* cauſed his ſonne to be ſhrowded, and ſowed vp in his winding sheete to coffin him, on the Beere & beare him to his graue, whilſt he was about this ſad worke, it came into his mind, he had heard it ſayd, the bleſſed Counteſſe *Delphina* did many miracles at the Citty of *Apt* in *Prouence*, and that she could reſtore him his poore ſonne. They mocked at his ſimplicity, and his ſeruants ceaſed not to ſow and make vp the corſe. The loue of a Father is a great matter, Go to (ſayth he) who ſhal hinder me to haue recourſe to this bleſſed Saint, and what ſhal I looſe verily if I get nothing, I wil a while leaue him in the bed, and not ſuffer him to be buryed: He withdrew into a place of deuotion, he oppened his heart before God; paternal loue, and ſorrow threw on his tongue a thouſand wordes of

affection, and into his eyes two fountaines of teares; I know not what he ſayd, or ſayd not, wel I know, the Hiſtory aſſureth vs the poore child lifted himſelfe vp, and leaped on the ground and reuiued againe in an inſtant to the amazement of the whole family, & to the infinit cõfort of the Father. As for the mother I wil ſay nothing, but leaue you to imagine the ioy of her heart. Behold one of another kind, Dame *Margarite* wife of Mõſieur *Iohn du Puys* a man of quality of the Citty of *Aix*, was obſeſſed, and the euil ſpirit often appeared to her, filled her with furious affrightments, that he thereby became fooliſh, and as it were frantique, the matter went ſo farre, that she loſt her wit, and became ſo enraged, that needs ſhe muſt be ſhut vp & faſt bound leaſt ſhe might ſtrangle ſome body, or miſdoo her ſelf. This woful ſpectacle terrified her diſaſtrous huſband, and the whole family; He had recourſe to hea-

uen and earth, and I know not to what Saint he deuoted her not. Al remedies were fruitleſſe; the more they ſought to rule his mad creature, the more she raued, and delighted in nothing but to bite, kil, ſtrangle if she could, & deuoure the whole world: I know not who ſuggeſted it to the Gentleman, that holy *Delphina* did many miracles at *Apt*. And what il can come of it ſay they, if you (Sir) make a religious vow to this great Saint for the health of your miſerable wife; God inſpired him to giue eare to theſe people; He beleſt them, he did ſo, he inuoked the Saint, he promiſed her wonders if she pleaſed to take pitty of this wretched woman, and doubt you not but he ſpake it with a good wil. He had no ſooner ended his moſt humble prayer, but that the Saint drew away, the curſed diuel, which obſeſſed this miſerable woman, and vexed her ſpirit,

Behold

Behold then in an inſtant, ſhe became of a furious lyoneſſe a meeke doue, & as gentle as a lambe: She was vnbownd ſhe was ſet at liberty, none more ſober, none more reſerued. The husband ouercome with vnſpeakeable comfort taketh her, leades her to their holy Aduocateſſe, and both of them gaue a million of thanks to her holy goodneſſe; from the time forward she neuer more was diſturbed with this miſchieuous and vexing ſpirit: What shal I ſay more? A Saint which chaſeth away diuels: which conquereth death, which cureth al manner of infirmities; which breaketh rebellious ſpirits, and conuerteth obdurate, melting racky hearts, and diſtilling them into moſt bitter teares; A Saint which enamoureth ſoules with vertue, and God, and which cauſeth envie, to ayme at perfection! what cannot she do, ſeing even Impoſſibility is to her poſſible, and she able

able to do al she wil? O happy, couple! O payre without peere! O two, not two, but two hearts in one. Ah! were I so fortunate, that my pen, or tongue might expresse to posterity your innocent greatnesse, and inexplicable Sanctity, what a fauour would it be? neuer should the world forget your merits, neuer should heart be without loue, but should beare engrauen on golden fillets *Elzear* vpon one syde, and *Delphina* on the other. May heauen by your liberal hands powre a thousand, and a thousand fauours on vs, and ouer happy *Prouence* your good Countrey al manner of benedictions both celestial, and terrestrial.

If peraduenture you desire to choose these two Saints for your particular Patrons, I wil here giue you a Copie of prayers ordinarily said in the places where their sacred reliques rest; prayers which resent their simple antiquity,

tiquity, yet are they not the leſſe cordial, nor acceptable to God. Your deuotion and the holy Ghoſt wil (perhaps) inſpire you with better, but the beſt of al deuotions, and that to which I exhort you, is, the imitation of their innocent liues.

THE

THE ANTHEM of Saint Elzear and Saint Delphina.

PRoles digna Prouinciæ, ſtirps generoſa Comitum Princeps ſummæ clementiæ, decus, & honor militum, (Elzeari beate) exora dari veniam nobis, & vitæ meritum, tandemq; fructum gloriæ, poſt huius vitæ tranſitum in cæli claritate.

Exultet Apta Ciuitas, quam exornat præclaritas fœlicium membrorum tantoq; priuilegio tui dotata religio Eccleſiæ minorum, in te ſunt oſſa condita, quibus ægris eſt reddita complectio votorum, ad te Confeſſor optime clamant languentes animæ pro venia malorum.

Verſus, Ora pro nobis beate Elzeari.

Reſpons.

Respons. *Vt digni ef[illegible]nur promis-sionibus Christi.*

Oratio.

DEus qui beatum Elzearium *confessorem tuum inter cætera virtutum insignia virginali pudicitia in coniugio decorasti, concede propitius, vt cuius sacram Commemorationem celebriter veneramur in terris, eius beata consortia fæliciter consequamur in Cælis. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.*

COMMEMORATIO
Sanctorum Coniugum, & Virginum Elzearii & Delphinæ.

Antiphona.

CÆlestes flores coniugis, bonis vernantes sæculi Elzearii *cum Delphina,*

ua fructus fe[illegible]dulcedinis, quibus lætantur populi, ex[illegible] dona diuina.

Versus. *Orat[illegible] pro nobis Sancti virgines Dei.*

Respons. *Vt digni efficiamur promissionibus Christi.*

Oratio.

DEus qui sanctis virginibus Elzeario & Delphinæ dedisti sanctissimæ matris tuæ virginale coniugium imitari, concede propitius, vt eorum meritis, & precibus transferri mereamur in regnum celorum. Per Christum dominum nostrum. Amen.

The end.

PAge 8. line 14. read price vpon; pag. 12. line. 6. read he ſauoureth of &c. page 15 line 9 read, rather had I: p. 17. l. 2. to moane l. 5. the poore, l. 8. perpetually furniſhed, l. 16. litle child, l. 22. his companions: p. 18. l. 12. ſo by the beauty, l. 19 diuine workes, p. 21. l. 14 he oppoſed theſe levvd ſeruants, p. 22. l. 8. his fleſh, l. 10 not been, p. 23. l. 15. the vvils of, p. 24. l. 7 Innocents, p. 28. l. 15. Innocents, p. 29. l. 5. thought to, p. 32. l. 1. a Paradiſe: p. 33. l. 6 like ants, l. 7 kingdomes: p. 35. l. 11. defects p. 36. l. 6 felt no, p. 48. l. 21 an eternitie, p 56. l. 3. thy poore, p. 59. l. 11. his cheife, p. 74. l. 9. and that I fatten hogs, p. 75. l. 5. heauie ſales, p. 78. l. 3. a cheater. p. 87. l. 3. tendernes of heart, p. 88. l. 12. vertue an, p. 93. l. 12. her ſtations, p. 94. l. 15. ſhe blevv, p. 96. l. 13. at euerie, p. 106. l. 1. his age, p. 108. l. 19. by an vnſpeakeable, p. 110. l. 7. it is not, p. 120 l. 7. Seruants, p. 138. l. 8. either to, l. 10. them in the fire of his holy loue then to condemne, p. 143. l. 12. heard of, p 150. l. 7. aftervvard, p. 154. l. 1 vvith doubt, p. 156. l. 13. vvords, p. 159. l. 23. belieue, p. 163. l. 12. an vſurer, p. 168. l. 8. runners ran, l. 9. the ring, p. 170. l. 14. ſuckt in, p. 177. l. 4. ſales, p. 179. l. 12. feare to, l. 13. an inordinate, l. 16. fil your court, p. 181. l. 17. ſacriledges, p. 183. l 4. vvords, l. 21 ſiluer veſſels, p. 185. l. 4 might be, p. 188. l. 9. feared, my, p. 193. l. 13. and gaue, p. 195. l. 23. vvound p. 206. l. 21. Rolandos, p. 210. l. 10. been beaten by, p. 211. l. 6. breath of, l. 10. eſtate, p. 212. l. 5. & to auoid, p. 218. l. 2. court, p. 237. l. 6. due to, p. 247. l. 10. they vvere, p. 248. l. 1. ſome euil, p. 283. l. 12. to trie, p. 161. l. 21. at court, p. 263. l. 1. a great, p. 280. l. 9 vvil, p. 287. l. 22. it beate, p. 291. l. 21. not thruſt, p. 292. l. 1. not

only, p. 193. l. 1. almes, p. 196. l. 15. them to, p. 293. l. 13. vvith an vnſpeakeable, p. 300. l. 9. any longer, p. 311. l. 14. rang of, p. 32[illegible]. l. 22. of S. Cath. p. 325. l. 18. vovved, p. 331. l. 14. do vvee loue. p. 340. l. 6. amazed, p. 342. l. 3. I vvel, l. 8. ſhal ſee none, p. 347. l. 2. he had, p. 354. l. 21. not deigne, p. 358. l. 15. calling them, p. 362. l. 1. to amuſe, l. 23. poudering, p. 363. l. 13. ſpeake ill of, p. 370. l. 18 hope, p. 373. l. 22. cleanlynes, p. 379. l. 19. ſold, p. 395. l. 20. again, p. 413. l. 5. did her, l. 19. the vvorld, p. 414. l. 2. caitiue, l. 20. aſſault, p. 416. l. 2. great, p. 427. l. 2. forget, p. 429. l. 13. tel them, p. 430. l. 15. Ah, p. 442. l. 1. gaue her, p. 442. l. 21. me to ſee that al my life hath, &c. p. 445. l. 14. hauing a, p. 449. l. 12. fathers of, p. 455. l. 18 his heart, p. 463. l. 13. Elzeari, p. 464. l. 3. Sanctæ virgines.

10 Ea

THE LIVES AND SINGVLAR VERTVES OF SAINT ELZEAR,

Count of Sabran.

And of his Wife the bleſſed Counteſſe DELPHINA, both Virgins and married.

Written in French by R. F. STEPHEN BINET, S. I.

AND

Tranſlated into English by S^r. T. H.

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M. DC. XXXVIII.

BRITISH
MUSEUM

TO THE RIGHT HONOVRABLE *JOHN ERLE*, of Shrewsbury, Baron Talbot of Goodrich, &c. And the Lady Mary his Counteſſe.

RIght Honourable, the many eminent vertues with vvhich the purified ſoules of this happy payre of Saintes was illuſtrated, as alſo the apt conſequence of tvvo

ſuch choice Examples after my late Edition of the Holy Court, drew me into this preſent piece, but moſt particularly, my ardent deſire to ſerue your Honours by this ſo faire an opportunity. Heer ſhall you ſee pious retirement in the midſt of publique pompe, ſilent contemplation in the noyce of a practique life, and a holy emulation in coniugall amity, mutually to out-vy one another in goodneſſe. Such happy ſtrifes begin with Zealous intentions, proceed with tranquility of mind, and are crowned with neuer fading comforts. Elzear appeares

in

in this Hiſtory, a Guardian in the chamber, a Counſellour in the cabinet, a Soldier in the field, and an Embaſſadour in publique employments: Al Which he mannageth prudently, and as Fiſhes in the Salt ſea, contracteth not the incident brackiſhneſſe of the tumultuary Waues of Paſſion. He growes to be a ſaint inſenſibly, and then ſeemes to himſelfe the vnworthyeſt of al men, When the pious hearts, and ready vowes of the beſt haue already cannonized him vertue. In Sibilo auræ tenuis. *Whiſpereth ſoft ſownds within his ſoule Which the tongues of men*

articulate

articulate into Wordes, and the Whole World loWd Ecchoes proclaymeth. The application, and vſe of theſe tWo remarkeable liues, I leaue to others, Who (though I be ſilent) may in the greateſt part of each, read both your noble names, not vnaptly charactered. In the meane time it shal Wel enough become me (modeſtly) not to particulariſe ought, eyther in your ſelues, or your glorious Aunceſtors, amongſt vvhom in moſt things many Elzears may be deciphered but thus iuſtly (as I do) in ſubſtance to offer the occaſion thereof, and With voWed Zeale euer ac-

knowled-

knowledging much obligation, to remaine the ready, & obſequious ſeruant of your commands,

Th. Hawkins.

THE

THE LIFE AND SINGVLAR VERTVES OF SAINT ELZEAR,

A French Gentleman.

The birth, and noble extraction of the Count Saint ELZEAR.

CHAP. I.

THAT which maketh the Count *Elzear* moſt eminent, is not the nobilitie of his bloud, nor ſplendor of his aunceſtours, but the illuſtrious greatneſſe of his perfections. He ſet a higher Prince vpon the innocent

innocent milke of vertues, and graces (the daughters of heauen) which he by long draughts had ſuck'd in, then the bloud of his aunceſtours, how noble ſo euer. Verily thoſe, who are borne in gold and ſcarlet, ſeeme many times to be created the obiects of all euils. Yet muſt we affirme, when nobilitie aſſociateth with ſanctitie, & that the rayes both of the one, and other commixe together; the luſtre thereof is redoubled, and more ſparkleth in the eyes of God, Angels, and men: but theſe are Phenixes, for full fiue hundred yeares the World produceth but one, and ſcarcely that. This happy coniunction in the perſon of bleſſed *Elzear*, graũteth him many great priuiledges, both in the Annals of the Church, and in Eternity. Could my pen be inſpired with the ſame ſpirit, which animateth the life of this diuine *Count*, I might hope to let the world ſee one of the moſt re-

marqueable liues which for a very long time hath been in the Church of God.

If I intended heere to draw his petigree, & to ſet forth his family I might make a particular volume. Writing the life of a Saint, who made litle account of earthly nobilitie, and onely valued heauenly, I wil not enlarge, to referre his aunceſtours, and all the names, and armes of families engrafted in his: I will tell you in groſſe, that his houſe was allyed (as ſaith the Hiſtory) to Imperiall, Regall, and Princely houſes of Europe. It hath had great Captaines, as Mounſieur Stileon his great grand-Father, Mounſieur Elzear his grand-Father Count of Forcalquier, Anſois, & other lands in the Coũty of Veniſin, in Prouẽce, the alliance of Sabrans, the family of the Lords of Saut, Porcellet, & other great Lords of Prouence, and Fraunce: But it is not my purpoſe to ſtay vpon theſe wordly greatneſſes.

His

His father was *Hermengaud of Sabran Count of Arian*, iſſued from a noble and auncient family of Prouence his Mother was *Laudana D'Albes*, or *D'Aubes*, daughter of the Lord Roquemartin who deſerueth for her incomparable vertue to be ſurnamed the good *Counteſſe*. Verily ſo was she, for thorough her excellent behauiour, her ſweet modeſtie, but aboue all by her ſingular pietie she wonne all the hearts of the whole world to loue, and admire her. Vertue hath this force by its powerful attractiues, that it imperiouſly ſwayeth ouer humane affectiõs: It is an Adamant which draweth to it the moſt harsh, and obdurate hearts. Perhaps this great goodnes was partly that which drew on her this bleſſing of heauen, to become the Mother of ſo good a Child, as *Elzear*. No ſooner had she conceiued this diuine Infant, but she likewiſe in her ſoule conceiued

a moſt ardent deſire to chaunge her life, and ſeriouſly to addict her ſelfe to the ſtudie of perfection. Whoſoeuer receiueth into his ſtomack a litle of the roote of *The flower de Luce*, hath ſo ſweet a breath that the ſauoureth of the moſt fragrant odours of march-violets, & all his words are ſweet and odoriferous.

This vertuous *Counteſſe* hauing in her chaſt womb conceiued this litle bodie, was ſo perfumed with the delicious ſauour of all vertues, that her Confeſſour wondring at this almoſt miraculous chaunge, confidently ſaied, that ſhould this Woman liue, ſhe would be a mirrour of moſt eminent perfection, or els haue a child to be one day a great, and glorious light in the Church of God. Theſe two Prophecies were moſt true, and very ſoone accompliſhed. Angell-Guardians haue many times inſpired the Mothers of Saints with imaginations, which were the Oracles of their

liues

liues,&the horoſcopes of Paradiſe.The mother of *S. Dominique* dreamed she was deliuered of a litle dog,who bare a burning torch in his mouth.The mother of S. Bernard confidētly thought, she was big with a dog , who lowdly barked,& for shame hid her ſelf,when she felt the throwes of child-bearīg. Another ſaw in ſleep, that al her bowels were caryed into heauen, and there chaunged into a bright ſun. The good *Counteſse* had a thouſand cogitatiōs in her ſoule, whilſt ſhe bare this holy Infant in her belly ; yea she bare him as a Treaſure hidden , and as a precious relique , which ſhould one day be the bleſſing of the whole houſe.

The time of her child-bearing being arriued, she happilly was deliuered in the yeare 1284.whilſt *Philip the Hardy* ſonne of our King holy *S. Lewis* raigned,& brought forth a Babe which (to ſay truely) ſeemed an Angel: It was in the

the Caſtle of Robians neare Anſois. She played not the foolish mother, fondly pleaſing her ſelfe with a thouſand demonſtrations of ioy, ſeing she had brought a man-child into the world; but deſiring to offer him to God and heauen, and rather to be the mother of an Angel then a mã, she tooke this litle creature into her armes, and with teares in her eyes, & with a voice ful of loue, made offer of him to God, ſaying; Lord God omnipotent, who with a powerful voice draweſt al creatures out of nothing, and giueſt them their Being: I yeild thee a million of thanks, that thou haſt been pleaſed to afford me this child; Thou gaueſt him me; Behold I reſtore him thee, yea cordially, to thee who art the benigne Father both of the Mother, and Sonne. I haue but one moſt humble prayer to make to thee. Good God denie it not: I beſeech thee receiue this litle infant

bathed

bathed with my teares, into the number of thy ſeruants, and beſtow on him thy moſt holy benediction. But if Alas! thou foreſeeſt he will proue rebellious againſt thy diuine Commaundments, I humbly beg with all the powers of my ſoule, thou cauſe him to die ſo ſoone as his ſoule is purifyed in the innocent waters of holy baptiſme; Father had I behold him without any victorious palme in his hands, or any merit, to die to the world and liue in heauen, then to ſee him, guilty of ſpiritual treaſon, leading a miſerable life in the midſt of the mires of this world, caytiue and replenished with a thouſand calamities. Al the world wept for ioy hearing this good Woman ſo to ſpeake from the bottome of her heart, and to conſecrate her eldeſt ſonne with ſo much feruour, to the ſeruice of God. Our Lord receiued this Holocauſt in the odour of ſweetnes,

and

& bleſſed the mother, and child, with ample benedictions.

This Babe was ſolemnly baptiſed, and on the holy font of baptiſme named *Elzear*. Good people of that Time named him, *the Lord*, *Saint Aulzias*.

Of his tender child-hood, and his firſt practiſe of vertue.

II. Chap.

MERCY, and all vertues ſeemed to be the nurſes of this holy Infant; ſcarcely was he borne, but that he ſoone shewed an incredible care of the poore. Being in the armes of his gouerneſſes, if he mett any miſerable begger, he caſt of his eies vpon him with pretty glaunces full

full of loue and compaſſion, then he ſet himſelfe to moaue and cry ſo bitterly, that to ſtill him they were faine to runne haſtily to the Caſtle, and bring almes for thy poore, and behold he was inſtantly appeaſed. To that the nurſes hauing obſerued this inſtinct had their pockets perpetually a furnished with bread and money to giue to the poore, or otherwiſe neuer would the child ceaſe to torment them: but being now growne bigger all he could lay hands on, he diſtributed to the poore, and when he was able to do ſo much as to bring along with him ſome title child, of ſuch as begged for their liuing, he cauſed them to dine at his table, and well entertained them, and himſelfe for the pleaſure he tooke therein, and to encourage them, fed with a good appetite. He was delighted to play with his companious, but it was to endeuour to winne ſomewhat, and inſtantly

inſtantly to giue it the poore. Well might he then ſay with *Iob* the great Eaſterne Prince; *Mercy, and I bee by one venter, and we are brother and ſiſter Twinnes, we were rocked in the ſame cradle, fed with the ſame milke, nor euer haue we liued one without the other.* God the Creatour by theſe petty trials of Infantine vertues, many times sheweth, to how high a degree of perfection he will raiſe ſome of his greateſt ſeruants. Too by the beautie of the dawuing we iudge of the brightnes of the morning and the noonetide; So by the bud we make an eſtimate of the roſe; and ſo by the firſt draughts of an excellent Painter we iudge of the perfection of his diuine world; when he ſhal haue heightned, and ſhadowed his piece, and touched it with the laſt ſtrokes of his pencill which turneth art into Nature. This louely Infant was all the loue of his parents, and of all the world; He

was

was beautiful as an Angel, of colour liuely, & vermilion; His cheeke ſeemed a roſe fallen into milke, hiſſpeach ſweet, and graue; his actions ſerious beyond his age; yet ioyous, and pleaſing; he was truly obedient to his gouernour, ful of dutie towards his parents, addicted to deuotion. He ſayed his litle Beades with ſo good a grace, that he imprinted deuotion in ſuch as beheld him to do ſo wel in ſo tender youth. This litle youth daily on his knees ſayd our Ladies office, and the office of the dead beſids his other leſſer deuotions, and moiſtned al with his innocent teares. *William of Sabran* his Vncle by his Father ſide, was Abbot of Saint Victor in Marſeilles; This child was deliuered to him to be inſtructed, and diſpoſed to vertue. Can you imagine how this litle child in a very short time ſo far aduanced towards perfection, and was preuented

by

by ſo many fauours from God, that the good father (who had been apointed his Inſtructour) was rapt with admiration to behold his deportmẽts ? Aboue al, one time that the litle Count asked him in what part of the world were Martyrs made ? Sonne (ſaid he) why do you aske me this queſtion ? Becauſe I ſhould much deſire to be caried into that countrey (ſaid he) that I may hope to haue the glorie of Martyrdome: For Alas ! If *Ieſus-Chriſt* powred out al his precious bloud for vs , why ſhould we not ſhed ours for his ſeruice ? Theſe words sãke very deep into the heart of the good religious mã, who drew a holy cõfuſion out of them & made vſe of them al his life time , as of a ſpur to prick him on to religious perfection? pondering in his mind , that this child had diſapproued the rule, which ſaieth, the *Diſciple ſhould not excel his Maiſter.* Now imagine with your ſelfe the other perfe-

perfections he acquired in this ſchoole of vertues, ſince he ſo early aymed at the deſire of Martirdome, which is the higheſt point of charitie, the Queen of Vertues. The ſeruants belonging to the Abbey, a wicked rabble, vttered a thouſand impurities to corrupt this poore innocent; all their words were nothing but ſcurrilitie, day and night theſe wicked creatures beſieged this impolluted lamb, deſiring to ſteale from him the precious treaſure of his virginitie, but with, a maſculine and heroique courage, he appoſed theſe lewd ſeruante, propoſing to himſelfe, by Gods grace, rather to die ten thouſand deaths, then euer to conſent to mortal ſinne. Hauing ouercome this inſolent crew of ſeruants he diſpoſed himſelfe to tame his owne flesh, (that familiar deuill of our ſoules) which he brauely reſiſted. Being about twelue yeares of age he faſted the Lent, with

with much rigour, & what ſoeuer could be ſaied to him to diuert him from it, yet was he inuincible, and inexorable. When he felt ſome rebellion, he paſſed much farther, for ſecretly he girt his delicate bodie with a rough Cord full of knots, and armed with sharpe pricks, he wounded this flesh, shed much bloud, and the matter had gone on further had it not bee, they read in his meager and diſcoloured face, that there was ſome thing ſucceded not well with him in this act.

The holy Crueltie was diſcouered, wherewith this tender youth mortyfyed his bodie; A thing which much aſtonished the Abbot, & all his Monkes, who vpon one ſide sharply chid him, calling him litle murderer of his owne life, but were on the other ſide wholy confounded, ſeing this litle Lord, shewed them their leſſon by vſing himſelfe in this manner. The holy

holy Ghoſt takes pleaſure to trace in theſe Infatine ſoules the firſt draughts of the great ſanctitie, which he with time will characterize on their liues, and will that from the bud we preſage the great beautie of the roſe,& flower of their ſanctitie.

Of his Virginall mariage, and great Puritie.

CHAP. III.

THE moſt illuſtrious *Charles* the ſecond King of *Hieruſalem*, and *Sicily*, being at *Marceilles*, would haue *Elzear* marie, whom he called his Nephew. The wilt of Kings are oracles, and their deſires commands. The child was not aboue

ten

ten yeares old; Yet was he made in his preſence to affie *Delphina, or Dauphina,* of Puy-Michel, daughter of the Lord Puy-Michel in Prouence a young maide, chaſt as a doue, and of a vertue ſuteable to *Elzears.* Theſe poore innocence ſuffered themſelues to be tyed like two ſilly Doues, and trembled before thoſe great Princes; they gaue each other hand, word, and promiſe to enter marie, when they were of age. The deſignes of God and men are very different in their aymes. The Princes hoped from this mariage to behold a flourishing poſteritie of Counts of *Sabran*; God will cauſe from thēce to ariſe a world of vertues, lillyes, Roſes, and miracles, which shall be admirable, and inimitable for al the world. Fower yeares after the betroathing, they were maried on *S. Agathas* day, in a place called *Puis Michel.* The ioy of theſe two great and power-

full

ful families can not be recounted. The feasts, Bals, and al the Entertainments. In these occasions the most exorbitant, are the braueſt men. Al is at libertie, and you would say these are triumphs for the death of modeſtie, which is ordinarily loſt in these ſolemnities. Al the world floated in pleaſure, our maried Couple only excepted, who reuolued in their ſoules, Thoughts, Alas! far different from common apprehenſion. They kept their hearts ſo cloſe that it is not to be expreſſed. Yet they did ſet a good face vpon it, whilſt the feaſt laſted, and with a faigned mirth (at leaſt as wel as they could) diſguized the preſſure which tormented their hearts. The new maried Couple were led along to the caſtle of Anſois to put thē in houſe together. When al the ceremonies were ended, and al the vexing noiſe of thoſe troubleſome Freind-Foes was finished, they were

left al alone together in a chamber. At which time the Innocent *Delphina* moyſtned her Angelical face with two riuers of aboundant teares, fetching one after an other a douzen of thick ſobs from the bottome of her heart, & proſtrated on both her knees before her husband spake theſe words (Sir) by the extreame violēce of my parents, I am here. I haue conſented to this mariage by meere force: A ſilly Maide (God wot) durſt not contradict her parēts, who hold daggers at the throtes of their poore children. I more eſteeme death then loue, and a Tomb then the nuptial bed. I haue conſecrated my virginitie to IESVS-CHRIST, I will either die, or keep my promiſe. Mariage is for men, Virginitie for Angels: I am reſolued to be one of them with the hazard of a thouſand deaths. Take heed you attempt not on that, which is vowed to *God*; Rather conſecra-

ſecrate your ſelfe thereunto. Ah! happy mariage, if we might be both maried, and Virgins together! This ſigh opened her heart, and the heart wide-opened; powred forth ſo many teares by the eies, that it tooke away her ſpeach.

Elzear much amazed at this vnexpected ſpeach, and feeling his heart trãſfixed with theſe diſcourſes watered with ſo many teares, was enforced to mingle his teares with thoſe of his chaſt Spouſe. God gaue him ſo ſtrong touches that he yielded to him, and, his deareſt *Delphina*, well pleaſed to preſerue chaſtitie; For to ſaie truly it was the tendreſt of his deſires. The holy Maide ſeing her ſelfe victorious, ſpent the whole night in great conſolations, powring out a deluge of teares at pleaſure, a thouſand prayers broken with a million of ſighes and ſweet extaſies, recommending the ſacred

Lilly of their Virginity to good IESVS. The enſuing nights (ſo ſoone as they withdrew) ſhe paſſed in a thouſand diſcourſes of heauen with her deare *Elzear*, tranſporting, his mind from Earth to heauen, and diuerting him from any other thought. Do you not imagine, when you behold this young maried Couple that you ſee *S. Cecily*, and her ſpouſe *Tiburtius*; *S. Alexis* and his deare wife holy *Pulcheria* with the Emperour, her Lord and huſband, or two doues, or Diamonds or rather two Seraphins on the Earth and two Innocens in the midſt of a furnace, not being burnt at al? When theſe wicked Courtiers tempted this young *Count*, deſirous to debauſh him, for ful Apology he ſaied; You well know I haue one of the moſt beautiful wiues at this day in the world, with whom I am moſt abounndantly ſatisfyed; what ſhal I then do with theſe poliſhed pieces with

with which you ſo impertinently vex me? Conſtancie ſurmounteth the inſolencie of theſe euill Court-ſpirits, which with ſo many outragious importunities though to ruine the inuiolable treaſure of his chaſtitie. The Salamander long reſiſteth the fire; but in the end her Ice is heated, is drop by drop diſſolued, and ſhe her ſelfe is turned into flames. *Elzear* a true Salamander, and a true Phenix congealeth among theſe Coales of the Court, and his heart is a Diamond totally inuincible, neuer to be mollifyed.

Of the great lights from heauen, and the holy assaults God gaue to his soule.

CHAP. IIII.

VELL may you thinke, when God was pleased to put this young Lord into so hazardous an estate, as a royal Salamander into the midst of burning flames; it was fit he likewise fortifie his heart with armes from heauen of a special temper, and a lasting proofe. The fifteenth yeare of his age on the Eue of the *Assumption of our Lady* being at Matins ouer night; He felt a great desire in himself that he might accompany his deare & holy

holy Miſtreſſe, who mounted vp to heauen, at leaſt in ſpirit, shooting his heart, and feruours of loue aboue the vaults of heauen. He for this intention confeſſed, and communicated with much affection, and at dinner ſitting at the Table with his Vncle the *Abbot* ſodainly felt his heart aſſayled with ſo ardent a violence of the Loue of God, that his breaſt ſeemed wholy enflamed with a great fire. This flame flew preſently into his face, he became al fiery, and as red as ſcarlet. His heart and appetite fainted, and needs muſt they haſtily lay him on his bed, thinking it a fit of a very sharp feauer. Verily ſo was it, but it was a feauer of the loue of God, and a diuine acceſſe of the holy Ghoſt which came into this bleſſed ſoule. The curtaines were drawne that taking reſt, theſe feruours might be quenched. In this ſacred ſilence he vnfolded al the playtes of his ſoule, and ope-

opening his whole heart, felt at Paradiſe to ſteale into his boſome. O God what a holy tempeſt of ſobs! what a happy ſtorme of ſighes vpon ſighes, & of waues vpon waues floating & rushing one vpon another, and drenching his bleſſed ſoule with a thouſand, and a thouſand, yea many thouſand fauours from heauen! O what lights, illuminated his ſpirit, what ſweet extaſies, wherewith he ſeemed to die, and his heart to shiuer in pieces. He couered this comfort vnder the vayle of Silence, and concealed it as much as he could, but that we know ſomething of it by his confeſſiſions. He ſaw (ſaith he) that al the earth was a litle thing, & that the whole globe was but as an Atome compared to the immẽſitie of almighty God. That our liues and Ages were but flying moments of Immortallitie. He was ashamed to behold the abiectnes of things, of which men

madè

made ſo much, account, as to damne themſelues to enioy them. What are metals but earth enuenomed, inſulphured, and accurſed?

What are Empires but clods of earth, which mẽ, like Auts diuide into Kingdome? What are honours but ſmoke, pleaſures but ordures, feaſts but ſlaughters, but murder, and meere lay-ſtals, & our ſtomacks but burying places for beaſts? Men, diuels, and wild monſters; our houſes, but churchyards, at leaſt hoſpitals, and true ſpittle houſes? He clearely knew the baſenes of Earthly greatnes, the ordinary precipices in the world, and eſpecially in the Courts of Princes where Vice walketh in triumph, dragging Vertues in chaynes like ſlaues; He ſaw gulphs, wherin he had a thouſand times been in daunger to drench the honour of his chaſtitie. That the leaſt act done for *God*, was more precious then al the world.

world. Finally he drew two maine conſequences from al theſe verities; The one, that were he to be made monarch of two worlds, he would not daine ſo to aduãce one ſtep forward towards it. The other, that he had rather die, then the flower of his virginitie should be polluted, or quayled in any kind. Theſe ſweetneſſes are paſſed ouer, needs muſt he returne among Companie, but after this viſitation of God, men ſauoured ſo it with him, and life was ſo diſpleaſing to him, that he a thouſand times was vpon the point to forſake al, and looſe himſelf in the holy horrors of amorous ſolitude. He breathed nothing but hideous rocks, thickets of forreſts, and pleaſing hermitages; where heauen on euery ſide ſmileth, the aire is more pure then in Citties poiſoned with a thouſand vncleaneses; ſilence, Faſts, long contemplations, were his deareſt delights and moſt precious

precious deſires. But he in the meane time felt a ſtrong inſpiration, and he ſeemed to heare a voice from heauen, which ſaied; *Elzear* my ſonne I am wel pleaſed to ſee thee in this ſweet deſpaire, to be able to liue ſincerily in the world's impietie But courage ſõne, take Courage: *I know thy ſtrength, and what thou canſt doe: Confide in me, for I wil do al where in thou art vnable, and will ſupply al thy defects.* This voice infinitely comforted him and immediately he put on a reſolution during life to preſerue Virginitie, though maried very young and rich. This Viſion ſo mortifyed al his affections, and deep buried al deſire of worldly things, that neuer after loued this moſt vertuous Child any thing but God and his ſeruice. Life and death were matters ſo indifferent to him, that had he been put to his choice, he would neuer haue propended to the one or other, wholy reffering

referring himſelfe to God. But contrarywiſe, the fire of al manner of Concupiſcence was ſo throughly quenched, and the guift of chaſtitie ſo deeply characterized in his heart, that he feld no rebellion in his bodie. This which I tel you is very admirable, without precedent, and without temeritie neither can, nor ought to be imitated by anie.

He and his wife lay in one ſelf ſame chamber, yea commonly in the ſame bed: but he hath confeſſed, the more he approached to this chaſt Doue, the more he felt him-ſelf diſpoſed to Virginitie. He had no other fire, then this diuine Loue, al the reſt was ſnow, Ice, and puritie. Be not amazed at this paſſage of confidence, for IESVS CHRIST often appeared on their pillow, inſpiring them with thoughts of heauen, and preſeruing them from any other cogitations. It is ſayd the diamond being

being placed between the Loadſtone and Iron, neuer approach one to another, but looſe their attraction.

I doe not belieue euery Diamond hath this power, but I am aſſured *Ieſus Chriſt* hath it, and that really, which is the cauſe we muſt feare nothing, we being ſo well garded, and throughly aſſiſted. From thence it came that *Delphina* neuer called him either husband or ſpouſe, but her Angel-guardian, the Father of her ſoule and vertues, the protectour of her Virginitie, and her Corps du garde: ſo likewiſe to ſay truly, he had an incomparable care of it. For if in the night time any illuſion were ſo daring as to aſſaile him in ſleep his heart neuer drozy, but perpetually in ſentinel, reſiſted theſe imaginatiõs, but with ſuch zeale, that he awakening ſtarted at it, & drewe them away. So much, did he abhorr, not onely the fire, but the leaſt ſmoke of Luſt, the

mortal

mortal enemie of his chaſtitie. It is ſaied the ſkin of a lamb, cannot brooke the neighbourhood eyther of the Wolfe, or his hide, and rather will fal in pieces, then ally with it. He was faine to abide with *Robert Duke of Calabria*, and with the other Princes ſonnes of *Charles* King of *Sicily*, who were at Aix.

Good God what a Martyrdome it was to him to liue in the Court; For commonly the aire there is ſo noyſome, that poore vertue vanisheth, nor can at al endure it. He heard a thouſand diſcourſes which killed him; Tongues the moſt ſlaunderous are very often the moſt acceptable at Court; There, vice is vertue, and vertue, vice. A man muſt be wicked, or at leaſt pretend it, to be accounted a gallant, otherwiſe he is held a ſot, a ſilly fellow, or a meere Monke. To forſweare menace, ſcoffe, blaſpheme, murmur, play the

the Whore maiſter, inſult, are the ſeauen guifts of the Court ſpirit, much more gracious then the ſeauen guifts of the holy Ghoſt. Repreſent vnto your ſelfe the Torments of this poore lamb amongſt theſe rauenous Wolues, theſe Lyons, and Tygers. Al his refuge was to the night, for enioying the benefit of ſilence, he ſpent it in diuine contemplations, in teares, and disburdening his heart by a hundred and a hundred ſighes which he breathed towards heauen. He deceiued al the world, riſing at midnight, & retiring by ſtealth into ſome corner a part, where he euer found God, and the gates of heauen, opẽ. O God, what amorous colloquies! What languiſhing complaints, to behold himſelfe condemned to liue in the Purgatorie of Court, and amongſt theſe diuel-courtiers, who vtter nought but ordure. On a time being about midnight vnder a window quietly to behold

hold the heauens, he was taken in a great extasie: He knew the Abisse of Gods mercies, that he were a hundred fold damned, if the helpful hand of Gods infinite goodnes had not preserued him from it, that there is not any sinne whereinto Man is not precipitated, if God take not pittie of him; That Man is so poore a thing, that he, and nothing are al one; That this wretched life is nought but a miry bog of Calamities, and the sub-vrbes of Hell; He saw, that his sinnes which to himself seemed so litle, were in the eyes of God so great that his whole recourse was to a prostrate humilitie before his diuine Maiestie, and a total resignation to his most gracious providence. In the meane time two fountaines of teares distilled from his eyes, ere he was aware; so much he was transported. God comforted his poore seruant, and gaue him leaue to heare this voice from

from heauen. *Elzear, Elzear*, torment not thy ſelfe ſo much vpon the conſideration of thy ſinnes, nor plundge thy ſelfe in this gulph. My bountie (deare Sõne) is infinitely much greater then thy ſinnes; I ſweare vnto thee I neuer wil ſuffer thee to fal out of my fauour. It was wel for him that he at the ſame inſtant was tranſported, and out of himſelfe, or otherwiſe he had run the hazard to die with contentment, hearing this promiſe of ſo ineffable conſolation, and the wiſh of Saints, to wit, to be aſſured neuer to looſe Gods grace. Yet wholy becomming extatique, he began to crie out. O what aboũdance! O goodnes! Goodnes of my God. Alas! How litle art thou knowne. Ay me, would to God I might with the hazard of my life ſo preuaile that al men might know as clearely, and loue as ardently this inexhauſtible Ocean of mercie, and

this furnace of boundles charitie. Heauen, and Earth ! but who am I that God ſhould vouchſafe to thinke on me, and caſt his diuine eyes, on a wretched worme of putrid Earth? Amongſt theſe eiaculations behold him againe in an extaſie, and obſerue what he ſaw.

A goodly meadow couered ouer with a verdure infinitely, and delightfully freſh; diuerſifyed with a thouſand millions of moſt odoriferous flowers, enterlaced with a chriſtalline ſtreame which crept al along this delicious leuel.

In the midſt ſtood a Church very ſpacious and beautiful, the meaneſt thing therein was the marble, the luſtre of gold, an the draughts of Aſure, and vermillion; In the midſt was the high Aultar al glittering with gold & precious ſtones. There was a very venerable man, Papally veſted in Pontificalibus

ficalibus ready to say Masse, waited on by a Clergy al clothed in tissued satin, and vestments extraordinary sumptuous, an infinite number of people were presēt at this solemne Masse, a Quire of musick, or rather Choristers of Heauen, & of the holy Chappel of Paradise were ranked round about the pulpit, and the Eagle. Instantly they thundred out the Introit of the Masse with a harmonie able to kil, or rather indeed to raise the dead. The words were these *Nos autem gloriari oportet in Cruce Domini nostri* IESV-CHRISTI, &c. (For the Masse of the Inuention of the Crosse was saied;) & they proceeded through out the Masse with such a tone, to wit, al one as in Paradise, with vnspeakeable sweetnes. He beheld the people transported with deuotion, and it seemed to him he saw in the hearts of this

companie al the dolorous and bloudy miſteryes of the moſt bitter paſſion of *Ieſus Chriſt* to be renewed, and to the life repreſented. In the meane time his two eyes guſhed out teares like two ſtreames, powring forth a deluge of vnſpeakeable delights; Thē he felt al the myſteries of the amorous paſſion of *Ieſus Chriſt* to be engrauen in the moſt ſenſible part of his heart; a thing ſo wel imprinted in his ſoule, that he neuer forgat this fauour whilſt he liued. Al his pleaſure was to ſpeake of the paſſion, and to ſuffer ſomething, to imitate his Maiſter. He became an vnſhaken rock, not moued at al either for ſcoffs of the Court, for calumnies, or any thing which happened how ſharpe ſoeuer it were, and to any other, but himſelf inſupportable. He loued both his enemies, and the enuious, and al his delight was to thinke with himſelfe that

that in the end our Sauiour would exalt his ſighes and do him the honour to mediate the Palme of Martyrdome for him, that he might render him bodie for bodie, bloud for bloud, and life for life. This viſion continued til breake of day; in ſuch ſort that their Highneſſes Phiſitian going to bid the young Princes good morrow as he walked along, ſaw *Elzear*, at the window; He went and ſaluted him; *Elzear* ſpake not a word; The other replieth; He was ſtil ſilent. He pulled him by the lap of his night-gowne: yet ſaied he nothing. The Phiſitian amazed, cried out ſo lowd, that he came to himſelf. At which time the young *Lord* fetching three deep ſighes from the bottome of his heart. *Ah ſweet IESVS* (ſaid he) *and where am I?* The Phiſitian ſeing him al-bedewed with teares, aſſiſted him, and led him into his chamber. It is very likely he

coniu-

coniured him to ſay nothing, & freindly to keep this ſecret concealed. But (good God) what tales were made of it at Court, and what torment muſt this poore Count ſuffer, who was a much better Courtier of heauen, then earth, In the end al was knowne by the Confeſſor; for he opened vnto him al the corners of his heart, and fearing to be deceiued told him both the good and Euil which paſſed in his ſoule, that he might be inſtructed, & not ſtand expoſed to illuſions, wel knowing the euil ſpirit is often transformed into an Angel, and very often deceiueth thoſe who confide in themſelues.

Notable Maximes for the practiſe of vertue which S. Elzear learnt from God.

Chap. V.

GOD who had ſelected this faire ſoule to cõmunicate his fauour vnto, finding him very faithful, one after an other afforded him many lights from heauen, & enkindled in his breaſt a thouſand & thouſand flames of true charity: many times he ſpent whole nights in colloquyes with God; ſometimes he was found al bathed in teares, ſometime his face radiant like the ſun, and diſſipating the darknes of night with the rayes of his viſage: but he made not ſo much account of theſe fauours of viſions

ſions, and high contemplations, as of the practiſe of moſt ſolid vertues; He therefore ſaied.

1. That when a heart hath once taſted the ineffable bountie of God, and the greatnes of eternal life, it was impoſſible to loue any thing, but *God.*

2. That it is not to be imagined, how much God deſireth to do vs good, when he findeth hearts wel diſpoſed, and which wil be loyal to him: But (out alas.) ſome, litle or nothing regard God; Others (verily) receiue his fauours, but Thieues as they are, They ſteale glorie from God, and become very inſolent and proud.

3. It is prodigious, that men ſhould belieue what they belieue and liue as they liue; a beliefe wholy diuine, and a life meerely brutiſh. Thinke you, mortals belieue and Eternitie either of good or euil, ſince for one momentary pleaſure they forſake God, and

deuote

deuote themſelues to the diuel by their exorbitant liues? The tongue of an Angel, Hand of a Harpy, Hart of a Dragon, what a hideous monſter is it?

4. Good God; ſaied he, what an inexcuſeable wrong do we to the goodnes of our Sauiour, who ſo much ſeeketh to do vs good, & findeth almoſt none, that wil entertaine it. He askes but two things of vs, to wit, puritie of heart, and an humble ſoule.

5. The more ſolid knowledge a man hath of God, the leſſe can he diſcourſe of his immortal greatnes. There is neither word can teach it, nor creature vnder heauen, to which it may be compared, al creatures are of ſo ſlight a value, that one is ashamed of their wretchednes, when God is throughly looked on. Alas! *S. Paul* cõming from heauen had very great reaſon when he ſayd there was neither tongue, hart, nor ſoule able to tel what he had ſeen.

They

They who talke moſt of God, are ſuch as commonly leaſt loue him. Al their Vertues vapoureth out in babble, and is exhaled in the ſmoke of Words.

6. The true booke of perfection, is not ſublime contemplations of the greatnes of God, of his Omnipotēcie, of his ineffable maieſtie; that, more properly is the Obiect of the bleſſed, and is matter of amuſement many times for idle ſpirits, But the true book of perfection, is the ſuffering of *Ieſus Chriſt*, the pouertie of his Crib, the penurie of his life, the profound humilitie, of his heart, the deſire to ſaue al the world, his bowels repleniſhed with charitie, his Obedience, his Death on the Croſſe, his inuincible patience, his bloud powred forth to the laſt drop, his precious bodie giuen for food, and expoſed to a thouſand outrages, and a thouſand indignities. Can one belieue this, and thinke ſe-

rioufly

riouſly of it, & after it offend ſo good a God, yea offend him mortally. Ah God graunt I die (ſaid he with teares) die a thouſand deaths, yea deaths moſt rigorous, rather then at any time commit one ſole mortal ſinne, againſt ſo good a God?

7. Nothing ſo much grieues my heart, as to ſee the litle accoũt wicked men make of the feruours of the loue of IESVS-CHRIST: Out Alas muſt we daily pierce a new his innocent heart, and open againe his bleeding wounds, and euery day nayle him to the Croſſe by our exorbitant, & truly infernal liues?

8. A great and moſt aſſured meanes of ſaluation is to be a good ſeruant of the holy Mother of God, she hath an incredible power, and wil, to ſuccour vs, to the vtmoſt of her abilitie. That men are vtterly abandoned both of ſenſe and reaſon, who hauing the

power

power ſo eaſily abandoned both of ſenſe and reaſon, who hauing the power ſo eaſily to gaine Paradiſe, ſo litle diſpoſe themſelues to do it.

9. Humilitie; chaſtitie; obedience, and charitie are the fower cardinal vertues of ſpiritual life.

10. A true note to diſcerne ſoules, which aduãce towards vertue, is when one no longer takes pleaſure in the world, and that al therein taſteth il; for in the ſame proportion as heauen is ſweet, the Earth becomes bitter, and troubleſome to vs.

11. When of neceſſitie we muſt be among libertines, and euil companie, make prouiſion of Antidotes, and counterpoyſons; Caſt into your heart ſome good thought, which you shall reuolue in your ſoule, whilſt others play the fooles, make prouiſion of ſome praiers liuely, short, and cordial, and dart them often towards heauen

heauen. Suger the viands of feasts with a litle gal of the passion of *Iesus Christ*; If you must daunce, put a litle grauel into your shooes, and some smal pibles; that, wil help you in one and the same instant to satisfie both God and the World. If you must be often in the companie of Women, arme your selfe with the corselet of a good haire-shirt, at the least of some rough girdle, which wil countergard your heart, and rebate the point of darts, which would otherwise transfix your soule.

Now this *Young man* spake, what he practised, and when during the day-time he had not meanes to do his dutie, al the night he attended to God, and himselfe, and might truly say; *night was the day of his deareſt delights.*

God

God reuealeth the greatnes of the holy Count's vertues.

CHAP. VI.

THE more Saints seeke to conceale their perfectiõs vnder a cloude of true humilitie, the more God is pleased to make these bright suns breake forth, & to expose them to the admiration of the world. *Garsenda Dalphant* was one of his nurses & gouernesses; a most noble Lady, and very chast, who had likewise in her husbands life, made a vow of chastitie with him. She was most eminent in vertue, & had often receiued the fauour from heauen to foretel things to come, and to haue many notable

notable illuminations : As ſhe bred this young Count from his cradle, ſo (to ſay truely) she tendred him as her owne heart, or the apple of her eye. Which was the cauſe she oftentimes praied hartily to God for him. Once among the reſt vnfolding her heart before God, and with ſcalding teares praying for her deare *Elzear*, she heard a shril voice proceed from the mouth of a Crucifix, which ſpake in this manner, (Daughter) be not afflicted for this young man, whom thou with ſo much affection recommendeſt to me, I loue him better then thou doſt, and haue appointed my owne Mother to be his Miſtreſſe. Can he be in a better hand, or may I ſhew more care of his ſaluation, then I haue done? The poore Woman was afraid, but it was a holy feare, hearing a Crucifix ſo to ſpeake. A while after recollecting her ſelfe, and taking courage

rage, she saied; (Sweet Ie*sus*) If this voice which I heare be an illusion, suffer not they poore seruants to be so deceiued. Alas) too well I know the frailtie of my sexe; nor do I at al confide therein! But I beg of thee, yea with al the affections of my soule, if it come from thee, thou (Lord) wilt vouchsafe to redouble thy fauours, & let me vnderstand thy holy wil. The next day, then, being at Masse, she heard these expresse words, (Daughter) what I saied yesterday, confidently hold vndoubted, and as comming from me: Effects shal ratifie my promise. The vertuous Woman trusted not al this, wel enough knowing the craft of the wicked spirit, who oftentimes transformes himselfe into an Angel. She went and sought out *Elzears* Confessor, and sincerely related the matter to him; He (goodman) mildly vrged his penitent, and speaking

king with him of many things, in the end made him confeſſe, that he had a filial and cordial confidence in the holy Mother of God, that the poore offerīgs he could make to God he did it by the virginal hands of this Lady of his heart; That the reaſon why he had almoſt no diſtractiōs in his praiers was, that before he began them he accuſtomed affectionately to addreſſe himſelfe to the Queene of Angels, humbly beſeeching her to put into his heart, that, which might be moſt acceptable both to her deare ſonne, and her, and for this purpoſe ſaied one *Aue Maria* to her. I wil not denie (ſaied he) Deare Father) but that ſo ſoone as it is ſayd in that manner, I ſenſibly feele my heart (as it were) raiſed to heauen; I ſee infinite matter of meditations and haue my ſpirit ſo ſtrongly tied to it, and ſo much comforted, that I do not thinke there is

vnder heauen any pleaſure comparable to it. I make account that being moſt vnworthy to preſent ought to the great God of heauen and Earth, I cannot do better (Wretch that I am) then to put that litle I do into the hands of the moſt worthy Mother of God. I find my ſelfe ſo wel in ſo doing, that it is wholy impoſſible to chaunge this courſe, & to make other addreſſes. So ſoone as I knock at this gate of heauen, it ſeemes to me al Paradiſe openeth, and on euery ſide ſmiles on me in honour of this Princeſſe of Seraphins, who deigneth to humble her ſelfe ſo low as to reflect a fauourable eye towards me. They who nearely obſerued the actions of this holy Count, ſaw, he with extraordinary care prepared for al the Vigils of our Lady; yea he kept them with great deuotion: and himſelfe perceiued that the Saturday nights dedicated

ted to the holy Mother of God, on the nights betweene the Vigils, and the feasts, and on the daies of her festiuals, he receiued extraordinary fauours, very great lights, and Visits ful of happynes, and superceleſtial comfort.

The firſt, and ſtrongeſt viſion which totally chaunged his ſoule, and which killed the world in his heart, happened vnto him on the very day of the *Aſſumption of our Lady*: when he talked of her it wel appeared it was his heart diſcourſed, his eies deliuered the reſt, & his mouth was that, which ſpake leaſt. If you would pleaſe him, you muſt talke of the *Virgin Mary*, teach him ſome manner of deuotion, and ſhew him the way how to yeild her ſome great, and acceptable ſeruice: Behold his theife ambition, and moſt precious delights. One day that *Garſenda* recõmended this her Nurſe-

child to God, in the chappel of *S. Catharine* in the caſtle of *Anſois*; she had an admirable viſion: She ſaw an arme iſſuing forth of a bright and tranſparent cloude, and a hand holding a precious ſtone in it, which caſt forth a liuely luſtre, and moſt reſplendent raies, in ſuch ſort that the chappel ſeemed al on fire; a holy feare made her heart to tremble beholding ſo ſtraung a noueltie. Amongſt thoſe amazements she had recourſe to *God*, fearing to be abuſed by ſome vaine illuſion; Behold a voice breakes out of the cloude, ſpeaking alowd and clearely. This Diamond ſo ſparkling is the Virginitie of *Elzear*, for whom thou now praieſt: He shal be one of the goodly lights of the world: But looke better on this ſtone, that thou maiſt know how beautiful. *Elzear* is before the eies of God: ſpeaking this the hand turned the ſtone; shewing

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it on al ſides, at which time ſuch aboundance of raies and lights came out of it, that the poore Woman being aſtonished, was forced to hold both her hands on her eies, vnable to endure the violence of theſe exceſſiue flames, and this eminent beautie, ſo that lowdly crying out. O God (quoth she) what ſplendour, what beautie; Ay me, what admirable beautie. In the ſame inſtant God manifeſted the perfection of the holy Coũt to others of great ſanctitie; (*Mablina* a noble Lady, and a Widow of much puritie, and a true Turtle (who had extraordinary, and ſolid fauours from God. *Mablina*, I ſay, one day ſaw a large feild al couered ouer with ſweetneſſe, and ſprinkled with a hundred thouſand flowers; There appeared a young man beautiful as a Seraphin, shining like a ſun clothed with cloth of gold and ſiluer; He bare a rich ſtandard depainted

painted with golden flames, and ſo radiant, that the ayre round about, was therewith al on fire. He walked along with a ſlow pace, and a port ful of maieſtie; after followed an infinite number of perſons of al ages, ſex and qualitie. There you might ſee by fowre, and fowre litle innocents to march along attired al in white, attended by heauenly Damſels, beautiful as Archangels, clothed in white ſatin embrodered with liuely flowers: Then Widowes moſt chaſt and modeſt, al of them with palmes in hand? Laſtly men and women, Potentates, and Monarcks, Popes, and Cardinals; a million of people, one much fairer then another, and verily a man would haue thought Paradiſe had been deſcēded on Earth. He which euer beheld a Woman amazed, might looke vpon the chaſt *Mablina*, who tranſported with vnſpeakeable ioye could not be ſatisfyed

ſatisfied with beholding this moſt bleſſed companie. After she had ſeen, admired, and a hundred times reuiewed firſt one, and then an other, and almoſt dying with deſire to thruſt into the throng, she in the end ſaied. Alas! who wil tel me what theſe moſt happy ſoules are, and who is this young man al of gold, in the front of this reſplendent companie of Paradiſe, *God* was pleaſed with this ſight, and this acceptable ſuit, & cauſed a voice to ſound which cleauing the aire, ſaied (*Daughter*) thou ſeeſt here the Angelical vertue of Count *Elzear*, and the holynes of his life, whom al the world shal honour with immortal renowne, and whom a world of people shal endeauour to imitate, or at leaſt piouſly admire; and with that al this diuine ſplendour was ecclipſed: Good God, what Ioy opened the heart of this vertuous Lady, when she heard this voicē

voice! Almoſt in the ſame inſtant in an other manner is placed God to reueale theſe glories, to the venerable Father Fryer *Philip of Rheggio*, a religious man of the Order of *S. Francis*, one of a life innocent, douelike, and very eminent through profoundnes of humilitie, and ſweetnes of diſpoſition. He ſaw in a Hal al gilded, and regally adorned a Couch-bed glittering with gold, & wrought with Embroderie, there ſat the Count *Elzear*, and the holy Counteſſe *Delphina* his deare Wife, two oriental pearles, and two ſtarres in the firmament of the Church. Between them both, appeared *Ieſus Chriſt* with a countenance wholy diuine, who beholding theſe two humane Angels, ſeemed to take ſingular contentment to be in the midſt of them, as a Sheapheard between two meeke Lambs, as a Sun between theſe two ſtarres, or like a lilly

between

between lillyes, which shal neuer wither. O if one could haue ſeen their hearts, and heard the words which *Ieſus Chriſt* breathed in them, the ſweetnes he powred into their ſoules, and the delights of their Virginitie. Good God, what a viſion had he ſeen! O ſweet Extaſie. There is found a ſtone in the boſome of nature called the *Amethyſt*, which can endure no ſtaine; It is inuincible againſt Fire; & is beautiful, though throwne amõg flames, whilſt there it lieth, you would take it for a fire-Coale. Take it thẽce, you find it more radiant then euer, and al one as if you had bathed it in the chriſtal ſtreame of a faire fountaine. Theſe two virgins put into mariage-ſtate (which is a furnace that conſumeth others) gaue ſuch a ſplendor to the whitenes of their virginal puritie, that you find few ſuch in the boſome of the Church. Fire, which waſteth

waſteth other, gaue life and luſtre to their moſt eminent vertue, which hath entertained heauen and Earth with admiration.

I pray giue me leaue to add one thing, which at the firſt ſtartled the poore Garſenda, but in the end infinitely comforted her. There was a ſolemne feaſt kept, whereat *Elzear*, and *Delphina* (two true turtles) were preſēt: The great entertainment being paſt needs muſt they (according to the cuſtome) al night, imagine with your ſelf what pleaſure the hart of this Angelical man tooke therein. Howſoeuer it muſt be, and of neceſſity the potion muſt be drunke: Garſenda of cuſtome vſed to go and bid her young Maiſter, and young Ladie good morow, at this time ſhe went very late, ſuppoſing it would not ſo ſoone be day in their chāber ſince they retired ſo late, cōming thither, and finding al ſhut, her heart began

began to quake, a thouſand thoughts, a thouſand apprehēſiōs paſſed through her mind: A ſmal matter tarmiſheth a chryſtal, and quite breakes it, a litle thing diſſolueth ſnow, which is reflected on by the rayes of the ſun, and ſo eaſily withereth the roſe innocently blooming on the buſh that I muſt cōfeſſe I can not be angry with Garſenda, ſeing ſhe had ſo iuſt a feare; ſhe obſerues, and lookes through the key hole to eſpy whither this yoūg couple, were yet, ſo late, and ſo contrary to their cuſtome in bed. O great fauour from heauen: O vnſpeakeable ioy for poore Garſenda; ſhe beheld them both in their virginal bed faſt a-ſleep, and being in their firſt and ſowndeſt ſleep they ſeemed two Cherubins placed vpon an Arche, which ſupported a true Angel of heauen: verily ſhe ſaw a bright Angel who ſmiling, and beholding thē with a gratious ey, held both his

his hands ouer their heads, ſhewing to haue a great care to defend them, and not to ſuffer one ſole thought to ariſe in their ſoules, vnworthy of their Virginity. This viſion vnlocked her heart, and wide opened it! Ah ſayth ſhe, I cannot feare any longer, euil may be fal them whom I ſo wel loue, ſince heauen hath had ſo particular a care of them and that their Angel-guardians preſerue them with ſuch, and ſo great charity, as to hold the hand of their protection ouer their heads. But it is fit I tell you the cauſe why they roſe ſo late, the trueth is they ſpent the reſt of the night in holy prayers, & tender colloquyes with God, bemoaning the time loſt in theſe feaſtes, and idle dauncings, which vndoubtely were to them a meere Martyrdome and a kind of Purgatory.

The Gouernment of his Family, and the newu Decalogue he gaue his houshold Seruants.

CHAP. VII.

THE vertue of *Elzear* hath hitherto been in minority, now when he is twentie yeares of age, we muſt take him out of pupillage. His parẽts could not liue without him, and he aſpired to no other greatnes, but to ſee himſelfe freed from a thouſand domeſtical, and very troubleſome captiuities, wherevnto he ſaw vertue enthralled: parents by redoubled curioſities very often choke the vertue of their children, & like

like, Apes by ouer-much dandling them, ſtrangle them. This young *Lord*, ſo much importuned his parents that in the end they permitted him to viſit the houſes of his wife, there to prepare a new forme of houſe keeping in his owne manner. He made choice of *Puits-Michel*, to reſide in, and being a good Sõne of a family, became a braue father of a family. The ſage-ſots of the world belieue vertue is meer Hypocriſy, & that deuout ſoules, are altogether lazy, & nothing apt for employments: They thinke they know nothing but to ſay their beades, and to make a lowd noiſe with *Kyrie Eleyſons*, and petty ſuffrages, and that otherwiſe there is not any thing ſo doltiſh or ſilly as theſe exteriourly pious, who heare two Maſſes a day, & ſuffer themſelues to be gulled, like meere Buffles. But he is very fooliſh, who entertaines this beleiſe; For it is vndoubted, ſolid

ſolid Vertue is of it ſelfe alone able to do buſines, and to diſpatch it wel. It alone taught *Moyſes* to be Lieutenant, General of the armies of God the Creatour; *Ioſue*, to be a Camp-Maiſter; *Dauid* to be a braue Captaine, the *Machabees* to be inuincible ſoldiers; It taught *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Iacob*, to be good houſkeepers, and excellent Fathers of familyes; For Iacob out of nothing, and by his owne induſtrie made his houſe very rich. You inſtantly ſhal behold *Elzear*, order his new family ſo happily, that it ſhal be a patterne for others. Firſt he framed a new Decalogue, which he deliuered to his houſhold ſeruants, commaunding it ſhould be obſerued, and that inuiolably. See what it is.

1. Al my people ſhal daily heare Maſſe, & neuer faile, what buſines ſo euer they haue. If God be wel ſerued in my houſe, I can not feare any thing wil be wanting.

2 Let

2. Let none be ſo hardie, as to dare in my houſe, either to ſweare or blaſpheme the holy name of God, or his bleſſed Mother; nor to for ſweare, or giue himſelf to the diuel; For the leaſt may happen to this miſerable man, is that I wil moſt ſeuerely chaſtice him, and then ſhamefully turne him away; Can I hope that God wil powre his heauenly benedictions on my houſe, if it be filled with ſuch ſcummy people, who at euerie word vow themſelues to al the diuels, or who take God by the feet and head, making our hayre ſtand on end with horrour. Likewiſe can I endure thoſe ſtinking mouths, which inceſſantly belch forth a thouſand impurities, and words ſo fowle not poſſibly to be tolerated. The rudde rabble of Lackeys infecteth houſes, and poiſoneth the ſoules of ſuch as haue one dram of vertue in them.

Yet muſt I let you ſee the ſweet rigour

gour of this good Count, & acquaint you with the petty Iuſtice he excercized vpon thoſe domeſtique offenders; For to go by degrees, for the firſt time that any of his people were accuſed to him, & that he cõfeſſed he had ſworne ſodainly or blaſphemed againſt the name of God through impatience, he impriſoned him in ſome cloſe chamber of his Caſtle, and there made him faſt, ſowndly giuing him nought but cold water, & hard bread but the party muſt take heede he dallyed not with his patience, for if he ſaw him, too often to returne to it he turned him away, and baniſhed ſuch baſe rabble from his houſe as vnworthy there of. One would ſay he had no anger, but of a lambe, or a doue: where the honor of God was touched. *Elzear* made no difference of perſons, and needs muſt one reſolue, neuer to erre obſtinately, or breake with him.